

**LOWNDES COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**REQUEST FOR BID**

**E-rate Category 2 Equipment**

**Switches/Wireless APs/Firewalls**

**Mailing Address**

**Lowndes County School District  
1053 Hwy 45 South  
Columbus, MS 39701**

**Bid Solicitation Start Time/Date: Monday, January 10, 2023 @ @ 1:00 p.m.**

**Bid Solicitation End Time/Date: Monday, February 7, 2023 @ 1:00 p.m.**

**Reverse Auction Start Time/Date: Friday, February 10, 2023 @ 1:00 p.m.**

**Reverse Auction End Time/Date: Friday, February 10, 2023 @ 1:35 p.m.**

**NO BID ACCEPTED after 1:00 p.m. on February 7, 2023**

**Request for Proposals E-Rate Category 2 Project**

**Lowndes County School District**

**Notice to Bidders**

Notice is hereby given to interested bidders that the Lowndes City School District will receive written, sealed bids until the hour of 1:00 p.m., February 7, 2023.

**Bid Timeline**

Letter of Intent to Bid Due Date	January 17, 2023 10:00 a.m.
Bid Due Date and Opening	February 7, 2023 1:00 p.m.
Reverse Auction Start Time	February 10, 2023 @ 1:00 p.m.
Reverse Auction End Time	February 10, 2023 @ 1:35 p.m.

### **Reverse Auction Information**

Bids will be received by an Electronic Sealed Bidding Process administered by Central Bidding at [www.centralauctionhouse.com](http://www.centralauctionhouse.com) at which time bidding will begin and run until potential suppliers have completed entering all bids. Official bid documents can be downloaded at Central Bidding or Lowndes County School District websites and are listed below.

**<https://www.centralauctionhouse.com/Category/10635/LowndesCountySchoolDistrict>  
<https://www.lowndes.k12.ms.us/apps/pages/technology>**

Electronic bids/proposals can be submitted at [www.centralauctionhouse.com](http://www.centralauctionhouse.com). For any questions regarding the electronic bidding process, please contact Central Bidding at (225) 810-4814 or [info@centralbidding.com](mailto:info@centralbidding.com). *Bid documents will not be emailed separately.*

**Registration with Central Bidding and acceptance of Central Bidding terms and conditions is not optional and is required to participate in this bidding event. No exceptions will be made.**

Specification responses must be submitted for this event in order to be considered for this bidding opportunity. Specification response forms shall not contain pricing. Pricing shall only be taken online through the Central Bidding website.

Specification responses forms and samples, if required, should be submitted at [www.centralbidding.com](http://www.centralbidding.com) by February 7, 2023 @ 1:00 p.m.

No bid shall be accepted or considered after such scheduled time.

### **Performance Dates**

Newspaper Advertise 01-11-2023 & 01-18-2023

Intent to bid letter due: 01/17/2023 @ 9:00 a.m.

Bid proposal response forms due: 02/07/2023 @ 1:00 p.m.

Reverse Auction Date: 02/10/2023 @ 1:00 p.m.

All correspondence and inquiries regarding this bid must be done via Email to:

[Jeanise.Andrews@lowndes.k12.ms.us](mailto:Jeanise.Andrews@lowndes.k12.ms.us) or [Roger.Gaudet@lowndes.k12.ms.us](mailto:Roger.Gaudet@lowndes.k12.ms.us)

If a vendor does not receive a response within 24 hours, it is the responsibility of the vendor to call Jeanise Andrews, Technology Coordinator at 662-244-5018 or Roger Gaudet, Network Manager at 662-244-5006 and confirm that the email message was received.

## E-Rate Category 2 Project

The Lowndes County School District wishes to upgrade its E-Rate eligible Category 2 Equipment. The District is seeking that all equipment proposed must include 5 year of manufacturer support and warranty at minimum. Pricing for Equipment and Services must remain in effect and must be honored until the service delivery deadline for the 2023 funding year which is normally September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024. If the service delivery deadline is extended for any reason, prices must be honored until the final C2 service delivery deadline for Funding Year 2023.

In order to be eligible to bid, all prospective bidders must include installation/setup/configuration of all proposed equipment to integrate into the district's existing Aruba and Fortinet switch, wireless, and security infrastructure. **Proposals from vendors who do not include installation, configuration, and setup WILL BE DISQUALIFIED.** All equipment must be properly grounded.

Data cabling will be part of another bid, so no cabling/wiring is required; however, proper grounding of installed/purchased equipment must be included following manufacturer's recommendations and following NEC standards.

The RFP will consist of Category 2 Equipment. Vendors will be allowed to bid on some or all parts of the RFP for all the sites in the RFP (i.e... if a vendor is authorized to sell firewall and backup battery equipment and does not want to offer a response for the switches and wireless, they can supply a response for the firewalls and battery backups alone and the district will allow the partial response).

### Intent to Bid

Lowndes County School District requests that all vendors interested in submitting a proposal complete the Letter of Intent to Bid that is provided at the end of this document. The Letter of Intent to Bid should be emailed to Roger.Gaudet@lowndes.k12.ms.us by January 17, 2023 by 9:00 a.m. central time. If an email reply is not received within 24 hours, it is the responsibility of the respondent to call Roger Gaudet at 662-244-5006 or email at Roger.Gaudet@lowndes.k12.ms.us to confirm receipt of your Letter of Intent to Bid.

Submitting a Letter of Intent to Bid does not commit you to bidding. The Letter of Intent to Bid is not a requirement to submit a proposal. In the case of inclement weather or other unforeseen circumstances, all vendors who have submitted the Letter of Intent to Bid will be notified of a change to the mandatory vendor meeting date or time.

### General

The specifications herein are provided to convey the intent of the District and do not indicate every equipment component necessary for the complete system that the proposing vendor shall provide. Technical specifications of all equipment and necessary components proposed should be provided with the bid.

Prices quoted shall be an all-inclusive solution including all applicable taxes, shipping costs, installation of equipment, configuration of equipment, any necessary cabling, training, technical support and trash removal, and represent complete installation and integration with the existing

network where necessary. All equipment included in vendor's proposal must be new equipment purchased from an authorized reseller. No grey market, third party, or used equipment will be considered. Prices quoted in the vendor's response will remain in effect for a one-year period (12 months) from the time of the contract signing or until the final service delivery deadline for Funding Year 2023 Category 2 products and services.

Omissions in the proposal of any provision described herein shall not be construed as to relieve the vendor of any responsibility or obligation to the complete and satisfactory delivery, operation and support of any services.

Should the vendor have questions or find discrepancies in, or omissions from this RFP, or be in doubt to its meaning, the vendor shall at once notify Lowndes County School District. All questions should be addressed to Roger Gaudet and sent via email to Roger.Gaudet@lowndes.k12.ms.us.

If a response is not received within 24 hours, it is the responsibility of the respondent to call Roger Gaudet at (662) 244-5006 to confirm receipt of the questions.

All bids must be submitted electronic using Central Bidding at [www.centralauctionhouse.com](http://www.centralauctionhouse.com). For any questions regarding the electronic bidding process, please contact Central Bidding at (225) 810-4814 or [info@centralbidding.com](mailto:info@centralbidding.com). Bid documents will not be emailed separately.

#### **THE BID WORKSHEET MUST BE THE FIRST PAGE IN THE BID SUBMISSION DOCUMENTATION**

**The first page in the bid submission packet must be the Bid Worksheet. The worksheet will show the vendor's total cost. In addition to the Bid Worksheet, Vendors MUST provide quotes submitted on the vendor's standard quote form showing line-item pricing. Failure to comply may result in bid disqualification.**

#### **Bids must include the following:**

The "Bid Worksheet" completed and signed by the bidder. Note, the "Bid Worksheet" is a total for all E-Rate eligible products and services. In the occurrence of discrepancies between the total costs and line item costs, the line item cost will be deemed to be the correct cost.

#### **Evaluation Methodology**

The Lowndes County School District Board of Trustees will award a contract based on the vendor(s) submission that best meets the needs of the Lowndes County School District with regard to the current Technology needs, future growth, RFP specifications, and not necessarily the lowest price even though price will be the primary factor. The following factors may be considered when evaluating responses:

- Price
- Technical Specifications

- Technical Certifications of Vendor Staff
- Number of Service Staff within close proximity to Lowndes County-Columbus, MS
- Vendor response time
- Turnkey Solution
- Ease of Use
- Experience with Vendor (includes vendor-supplied customer references and recent (7 years) district experience with vendor (if any); may also include any publicly available reports or testimonials regarding recent Vendor performance)

### **Vendor Qualifications**

The Lowndes County School District may make such investigations as deemed necessary to determine the ability of the bidder or subcontractors or suppliers to perform the work, and the bidder shall furnish to the Lowndes County School District all such information and data for this purpose as the Lowndes County School District may request. The Lowndes County School District reserves the right to reject any bid if the evidence submitted by or investigation of such Bidder fails to satisfy the Lowndes County School District that such bidder is properly qualified to carry out the obligations of the contract and/or to complete the work contemplated therein within the time required.

The bidder is specifically advised that any person, firm or other party to whom it proposes to award a subcontract or purchase order under this contract must be acceptable to the Lowndes County School District.

The successful vendor (contractor) must have or be certified with the following:

- Be able to supply all products and services
- Be an authorized dealer in the State of Mississippi for all products
- Have current liability insurance and workers compensation insurance (certificates of insurance must be furnished by winning bidder within 10 days of award)
- Provide documentation of the vendor's employee certifications
- Participate in the mandatory vendor meeting. Any bid submitted by a vendor who does not attend the mandatory vendor meeting will not be considered. There will be no exceptions.
- Provide an E-Rate SPIN
- Provide at least 3 references for projects of the same scope and size

### **Financing**

This project will be subsidized by the E-Rate program and is therefore subject to funding availability and contingent upon E-Rate funding. Due to the extended period of time it could take for the District to receive a funding commitment from USAC for this project and possible unforeseen financial circumstances, any contract arising from this RFP will also be contingent

upon the District's availability of funds at the time of funding for the non-E-Rate portion of the project. The District also reserves the right to increase or decrease quantities requested in this RFP to adhere to the District's needs at the time of funding.

The District reserves the right to purchase products and services from the winning bid response during the term of the subsequent contract using alternate funding sources if alternative funding becomes available during the contract term

### **Disqualification of Bidder**

The Lowndes County School District reserves the right to award to other than the lowest bidder when, in the judgment of the District administration, it is in the best interest of the District to do so. The district reserves the right to select the lowest and or best bid. A Bidder may be disqualified for any substantial non-compliance with the terms of this RFP, including:

1. Bidder's failure to sign Bidder's Proposal Form or to otherwise properly complete the Proposal Form
2. Bidder's failure to include documentation for required certifications and authorizations

A Bidder may also be disqualified for the following reasons:

1. Bidder being in litigation or dispute with the Lowndes County School District
2. Bidder having defaulted on a previous contract
3. Bidder having preformed unsatisfactorily on a previous contract, including but not limited to the Bidder's failure to fulfill the warranty obligations of a previous contract with the Lowndes County School District

**The Lowndes County School District will strictly adhere to the rules and regulations of the E-Rate program when evaluating bid responses.**

## **Equipment and Cloud Application Specifications**

For detailed switches, wireless access points, managed cloud application, and firewall specifications, please see corresponding document named LCSD Equipment Specs.pdf and associated school map and pictures files in the LCSD Maps.zip file for equipment/switch closet locations if applicable **(SEE “EXHIBIT A EQUIPMENT.xlsx” spreadsheet)**



## **E-Rate**

This proposal request is for services to be subsidized under the Universal Services E-Rate Program for Schools and Libraries. **No purchase order will be issued, no installation will occur, and no services will be provided until approval of the form 471 application AND approval by Lowndes County School District for the District's non-E-Rate portion. If District funds are not available for the District portion, all contracts will become null and void for this RFP.**

## **Right to Reject**

The Lowndes County School District reserves the right to accept or reject all proposals or sections thereof when the rejection is in the best interest of the District. The Lowndes County School District reserves the right to award without further discussion. Therefore, responses should be submitted initially with the most favorable terms the vendor proposes. The Lowndes County School District reserves the right to reject the proposal of a vendor who has previously failed to perform properly or completed on time contracts and to reject the proposal of any vendor who in the opinion of the Lowndes County School District, is not in a position to adequately perform the contract. The Lowndes County School District reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, any part or parts of a proposal, waive any technicalities/informalities, increase or reduce quantities, make modifications or specifications, and award any or the entire contract in a manner that is in the best interest of the Lowndes County School District. Contracts will be awarded for each part of the RFP to the vendor or vendors submitting the proposal determined to be in the best interests of the Lowndes County School District.

**BID PROPOSAL RESPONSE FORM**

**Due 02/07/2023 @ 1:00 p.m.**

**C. BID SPECIFICATIONS**

**C-1. GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS:**

1. This following are the General Conditions for the work to be performed as outlined in the detailed specifications listed.
2. Lowndes County School District has the right to increase or decrease quantities based on the prices, e-rate funding. In addition; Lowndes County School District would like to be able to make purchase from this bid for an option of a one-year period.
3. The specifications listed below are the required minimum specs. Lowndes County School District will accept bids that exceed the specifications that are listed.

**Please indicate Yes or No for the general specifications listed below.**

<b>Aruba Authorized Partner</b>	Yes _____	No _____
<b>Fortinet Authorized Partner</b>	Yes _____	No _____
<b>APC Authorized Partner</b>	Yes _____	No _____
<b>Installation/Setup/Configuration included</b>	Yes _____	No _____
<b>Provide references of similar installs</b>	Yes _____	No _____
<b>Possible after business hours</b>	Yes _____	No _____
<b>E-Rate SPIN</b>	Yes _____	No _____

By signing the Bid Proposal Response Form, the Bidder certifies that this information is correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

\_\_\_\_\_

Bidder Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Date Signed

**BID PROPOSAL RESPONSE FORM**  
**LOWNDES COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**DUE: 02/07/2023 @ 1:00 p.m.**

Lowndes County School District has existing Aruba switching and wireless infrastructure, a security infrastructure based on Fortinet technologies, and existing APC battery backup systems. Would you be able to successfully install/setup/configure purchased equipment to integrate into the district's existing infrastructure mentioned prior and if so, would you be able to provide some general details regarding this?

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What is the expected delivery time of the equipment and are there any foreseen delays due to the pandemic?

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**Any Additional Comments:**

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By signing the Bid Proposal Response Form, the Bidder certifies that this information is correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Bidder Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Signed

**BID PROPOSAL RESPONSE FORM**

**REFERENCE SHEET**  
**DUE: 02/07/2023 @ 1:00 p.m.**

Please identify three (3) current users (similar scope, education, or commercial accounts) of your services that we may contact:

**Reference 1**

Institution / Company Name \_\_\_\_\_

Project Description/Scope \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Reference 2**

Institution / Company Name \_\_\_\_\_

Project Description/Scope \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Reference 3**

Institution / Company Name \_\_\_\_\_

Project Description/Scope \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Phone#: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

By signing below, the vendor acknowledges that the prices listed on this sheet are the prices being bid for this project and that the vendor understands that portions of this Project may be funded from E-Rate Funds. This project is subject to funding availability and contingent upon E-Rate funding. The District reserves the right to purchase products and services from the RFP response during the term of the contract using alternate funding sources if alternative funding becomes available.

COMPANY NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

REPRESENTATIVE NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**BID WORKSHEET**

**PRICING INFORMATION (Total Cost for ALL E-Rate Eligible Locations)**

**(THIS DOCUMENT MUST BE THE TOP PAGE OF YOUR SUBMISSION)**

You must submit a standard quotation showing line-item pricing total in addition to this worksheet.

**MUST FILL IN THE TOTAL PRICE FOR THE ENTIRE E-RATE ELIGIBLE PORTION OF THE PROJECT BELOW.**

**Lowndes County School District  
2023 E-Rate Bid Worksheet**

E-Rate Eligible PROJECT TOTAL PRICE for Hardware and Cloud: \_\_\_\_\_

**DO NOT INCLUDE INELIGIBLE COSTS IN THE ABOVE TOTALS. PRICING ON THIS PAGE IS FOR E-RATE ELIGIBLE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES ONLY. PLEASE PROVIDE A SEPARATE QUOTE FORM FOR ALL INELIGIBLE ITEMS/LOCATIONS.**

In the occurrence of discrepancies between the total costs listed above and costs from the itemized quotes, the costs from the itemized quotes will be deemed to be the correct cost.

Please include a line item/catalog pricing schedule in your bid for all bid items including installation, setup, configuration, labor, travel, etc. and any proposed alternative equipment.

## **Reverse Auction Required Documents**

Bid worksheet and service provider quotes

Specifications for the proposed hardware

References

Documentation of the vendor's certifications

E-Rate SPIN number

Qualifications and training of vendor technical staff

Trouble ticketing procedures and escalation process

Any other documentation required previously in this document

### DISTRICT BUILDING INFORMATION

<b>Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>City/State/Zip</b>
West Lowndes Elementary	1000 Gilmer-Wilburn Road	Columbus, MS 39701
West Lowndes High	644 S. Frontage Road	Columbus, MS 39701
Caledonia Elementary	9509 Wolfe Road	Caledonia, MS 39740
Caledonia Middle	9 Confederate Drive	Caledonia, MS 3940
Caledonia High	111 Confederate Drive	Caledonia, MS 39740
New Hope Elementary	199 Enlow Drive	Columbus, MS 39701
New Hope Middle	3419 New Hope Road	Columbus, MS 39701
New Hope High	2920 New Hope Road	Columbus, MS 39702



**LETTER OF INTENT TO BID DUE: 01/17/2023 @ 10:00 a.m.**

Roger Gaudet, Network Manager  
Lowndes County School District  
Roger.Gaudet@lowndes.k12.ms.us  
662-244-5006

Reference: Lowndes County School District 2023 E-Rate C2 Bid

This letter is to notify you that it is our present intent to submit a proposal in response to the above referenced RFP. The individual to whom information regarding this RFP should be transmitted is:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Company: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State & Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Title*