

**3/13/2007**

**ADDENDUM #2**

**RFQ/RFP # 7003294**

**Title: Statewide School Food Service Program**

**Submission Deadline: 25 April 2007 @2:00PM (EDT)\_**

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- **Following is the pre-proposal meeting summary**
- **No further questions shall be entertained**

**Jerome D. Moynihan, C.P.M., CPPO**

**RFP# 7003294**  
**Title: Statewide School Food Services Program**

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### **Vendor 1**

- 1. Has the state agency conferred with the USDA regarding the preference for Rhode Island products in purchasing? We note that 7 CFR 3016.60(c) specifically disallows preferences?**

**Answer:** Yes, the intent of the RFP is to actively include local farms in the competitive price process (Pg 5&6).

- 2. Will the state be providing a list of schools that have agreed to participate in this program prior to the bid due date?**

**Answer:** No, it is expected that the selected vendor will recruit districts to join the contract based on a state plan that the vendor will develop in year 1 that has enticements such as increased efficiencies of statewide operations, healthier food offerings, staff development, wellness education and activities, technology plan for accountability and equipment needs (Pg 4&5).

- 3. Will the state be providing more detailed information about the schools participating in this program (historical meal count data, enrollment, etc.)?**

**Answer:** Appendix XI on the eSNACS website has Districts' Meals Served, Revenue and Expenditures, and Eligibility Information (FRP and enrollment) for SY-2004-05.

- 4. Will districts in the state be required to participate? If not, what incentives will the state offer schools to participate?**

**Answer:** No, it is expected that the selected vendor will recruit districts to join (see Question #2). The State's role will be that of leadership, support and encouragement to districts (Pg 5&7). The intent is to obtain the services of a change agent to ensure the success of the recruitment effort.

- 5. The RFP implies that all schools will need to be charged the same "management fee" -- does this mean the same calculation must be used to determine each school's fee?**

**Answer:** No, the management fee charged is expected to be reasonable and consistent to participating districts (Pg 10&13&14).

- 6. The RFP implies that the same meal rate [Prices?] must be charged to all districts, are sliding scale fees permitted?**

**Answer:** Yes, the RFP acknowledges that different meal prices will be needed for different districts.

7. Is the state issuing a form agreement as part of this process or will districts and the FSMC continue to be allowed to negotiate their own terms?

Answer: It is the intent that the statewide contract serve as an umbrella agreement under which each district will execute a separate mini-contract that operates in much the same manner as current contracts (Pg 2).

8. If there will be a form, will the state be providing a form prior to the bid due date for FSMC's to comment on?

Answer: See #7.

9. The RFP states that during the life of the contract, the State may separately solicit bids for initiatives within the proposal (page 3). Please provide an example of such a separate solicitation the state might consider.

Answer: It is not the State's intent to solicit initiatives separately from the RFP. This is Purchasing' boiler plate language stating the State has this right. Any final contract negotiated with a vendor will clearly stipulate all terms and conditions.

10. Does the state intend to grant master contracts to multiple FSMCs?

Answer: No, the purpose of this RFP is to select a single vendor (Pg 4).

11. Will the FSMC be allowed to continue its current contracts within the state separately from this master agreement?

Answer: Yes, this RFP does not prevent current contracts to continue with renewals available.

12. If districts choose not to participate in the state master program, is the winning FSMC precluded from bidding on those accounts separately from the master program?

Answer: No. However, the expectation is that the bidder is already working on a plan to bring all districts into the statewide contract. See #2 above.

13. Will contracts permit advances?

Answer: This is not part of the RFP. It would be negotiated in the mini-contract with the individual districts.

14. Who will be legally obligated to pay the invoice to the FSMC's?

Answer: The payment will still be made by the school district.

15. Who will be responsible for capital investments (i.e. POS systems)?

Answer: The developed state plan will address a multi-year purchasing plan (Pg 9) for kitchen and cafeteria equipment that districts will purchase.

16. How will costs be borne by each respective school district if there are "shared resources (i.e. an area manager)?

Answer: As part of the statewide plans being developed, an allocation method to apply shared resources should be included.

17. My we bill for Purchases rather than Usage?

Answer: Yes.

18. How are Commodities and the NOI program dealt with?

Answer: There is no change to the commodity program.

19. May we charge our various Charges (e.g. Insurance, SPC, IT, etc.)?

Answer: Yes, However, only for reasonable (competitive) costs that are required to conduct the food service operation.

## Vendor 2

1. What information will be included in the "umbrella agreement"?

Answer: The negotiated proposal.

2. Please supply a draft of the "umbrella agreement".

Answer: The umbrella agreement is created from the submitted proposal.

3. What districts are participating in this RFP?

Answer: It is expected that the selected vendor will recruit districts to join the contract based on a state plan that the vendor will develop in year 1 that has enticements such as increased efficiencies of statewide operations, healthier food offerings, staff development, wellness education and activities, technology plan for accountability and equipment needs (Pg 4&5).

4. What Criteria for selection of a vendor will be used?

Answer: Based on a score from the technical proposal elements: 1. Contractor Understanding of the Issues, Pg 12 (25 points); 2. Work Plan, Pg 13 (40 points); 3. Capacity of the Applicant to Administer a Statewide Food Service Program, Pg 14 (15 points); 4. Quality of Key Personnel, Pg 14 (10 points); 5. Evaluation, Pg 14 (10 points).

5. Please provide a template for the financial proposal (i.e. financial schedule to be submitted with the proposal).

Answer: A template will be developed with the selected vendor's input that will include, but not be limited to, the revenue and expenditure categories in the FSMC Fiscal Requirements, Appendix VIII.

6. Please explain how an award of contract will be made.

Answer: Please see #4 above. After a vendor is selected, a contract and other

required materials are developed in accordance with purchasing protocol.

7. What type of communication have you had with the school districts in Rhode Island concerning this solicitation?

**Answer: All Business Officials and Superintendents have been informed about this solicitation.**

8. What are the details of each school districts "mini" contract? Will you disclose each contract in case there are financial ramifications on a statewide level?

**Answer: It is the intent that the statewide contract serve as an umbrella agreement under which each district will execute a separate mini-contract that operates in much the same manner as current contracts (Pg 2). The intent of this RFP is for statewide efficiencies with each participating district to benefit from each.**

9. Specifically what are "selected initiatives" with the state that can be solicited outside of the state wide contract?

**Answer: It is not the State's intent to solicit separately initiatives within the RFP. This is Purchasing' boiler plate language stating the State has this right.**

10. Do you have a template for creating the various state and district level planning requested in the RFP?

**Answer: No, that will be developed by the selected vendor.**

11. What is the thought behind the idea that participation will increase by radically changing the menu's across the state and serving foods children are not used to and traditionally do not like to eat?

**Answer: It is the intent of this RFP to improve the nutritional quality of foods that appeal to students that are served in schools. This along with nutrition education will empower students to make healthy choices not for just today but to incorporate them in their everyday lives. Schools need to provide this education and it should start in the cafeteria.**

12. Will there be pilots and testing done before implementing the contract to assess potential meal count changes?

**Answer: No.**

13. Why does the state sanction serving skim milk to students when the fat in milk has been proven to be vital to brain development? Pediatric clinicians noted a number of years ago that children who were put onto low fat and low-cholesterol diets failed to grow properly.

**Answer: Skim is but one low fat milk option to be offered. While skim milk may not be appropriate for certain individuals, offering it helps to reduce the total fat content of planned menus for all students. Encouraging the consumption of skim milk allows the menu planner to allow for fat from other sources. Students shall be offered 1% or skim, non-flavored milk as a choice among other milk choices everyday (Appendix I/Nutrition Criteria/Milk Fat).**

14. Which cities/towns have a Summer Program, which sites, how many meals per site?

**Answer: Summer 2006**

**City of Providence: 118 sites: Total meals\*=369,235**

**City of Central Falls: 8 sites: Total meals= 31,694**

**City of Pawtucket: 22 sites: Total meals= 59,623**

**City of Woonsocket: 11 sites: Total meals= 22,811**

**\*breakfasts, lunches, and snacks**

15. What are the nutrition standards for the summer programs?

**Answer: The Summer Food Service Program has its own meal pattern requirements. The requirements are posted on the eSNACS website.**

16. Explain how food and supply purchasing will be monitored.

**Answer: There will be a change agent available to help with implementation and oversight. Once the agreement is implemented, monitoring will be through required reports and on reviews/visits (Federal and State).**

17. Many of the state commodities gotten from the federal government do not meet the sodium requirements of the RFP. Will commodities be excluded from this agreement if they do not meet the requirements?

**Answer: No, the vendor should be able to balance higher sodium foods with lower sodium foods in order to lower the overall sodium level. In addition, requests for foods with lower sodium levels (less processed foods) should be pursued.**

18. Will the state require future USDA commodities earmarked for Rhode Island to meet the standards in this RFP?

**Answer: This will be a joint effort.**

19. Please provide your expectations of the roles of the 10-12 managers. How many will be focused on statewide activities and how many on district activities?

**Answer: This was only an estimate. It is expected that the FSMCs are the professionals with the business expertise that can develop a plan to staff schools and identify the appropriate number of managers/directors required.**

20. How many schools/districts will each manager be responsible for overseeing operations in your expectation?

**Answer: It is expected that FSMCs are the professionals with the business and food service expertise that can develop a plan to staff schools and identify the appropriate number of managers/directors required.**

21. Is this RFP Nutrient based or NuMenu's based?

**Answer: Nutrient based and NuMenus are the same. The RFP does not identify which menu planning system to use. It is expected that FSMCs are the professionals with the food service expertise to recommend the menu planning**

system that best achieves the nutrition criteria outlined in the RFP.

22. Will the successful vendor take over operations at the Cranston commodity facility? How will that relationship work?

**Answer: No.**

23. How will you determine success or failure of the program?

**Answer: A school meal program that provides access to meals that meet nutrition standards outlined in the RFP to all students in participating districts.**

24. Has the state selected a POS System to approve for this project? Will the state provide Technology support to enable the system to work directly with esnacs?

**Answer: No, the State has not selected a POS system. The POS company should provide the data file in the eSNACS format. The State will be available to provide technical assistance for technology interface.**

25. How will this charge be allocated to the member districts?

**Answer: This should be identified in the statewide plan.**

26. We request the following information: (non-Sodexo partnered school districts)

- Names of member districts –
  - **Members will join during year 1.**
- 12 months of meal counts for member districts
  - **See Appendix XI, F District Data #3 Districts' Meals Served on the eSNACS website (see below for instructions to access information).**
- Sales and Cost information for member districts by district (including catering, a la carte, vending, adult sales, lunch sales, breakfast sales, other revenue, food cost, labor cost, supply costs, etc.)
  - **See Appendix XI, F District Data #2 Districts' Revenue and Expenditures eSNACS website (see below for instructions to access information)/specific information is not collected.**
- Enrollments of member districts
  - **See Appendix XI, F District Data #4 Districts' Eligibility Information eSNACS website (see below for instructions to access information)**
- School locations
  - **See eRIDE website [www.eride.ride.ri.gov](http://www.eride.ride.ri.gov) for school locations.**
- Breakfast and lunch times
  - **Information not collected.**
- Employee information (including number, pay rates, collective bargaining agreements, number of people enrolled in benefits, number of days worked, background check information, etc)
  - **Information not collected.**
- List of contacts at each school district
- Free and Reduced application counts organized by district and by school
  - **See Appendix XI, F District Data #4 Districts' Eligibility Information eSNACS website (see below for instructions to access information)**

- Existing FSMC contracts for each currently contracted school district
- Details of current renovations at all school districts
  - **Information not available.**
- Health department inspection records for all school districts
  - **Information not collected by RIDE collected by DOH.**
- List of goals and expectations for each school district's program
  - **Information not collected.**
- Breakfast and lunch prices
  - **Added to the eSNACS website 2006-07 school year (see below for instructions to access information).**
- State matching funds paid for the 2006-2007 school year, by district
  - **Added to the eSNACS website for 2004-05 school year(see below for instructions to access information).**

The instructions to access this information are as follows:

- 1) Login to the CNP Connect, the homepage opens. The homepage has information available for the public, no login or password required.
- 2) Click on the + sign in front of eFORMS MANAGER on the top left of the homepage.
- 3) Next click on School Nutrition Programs (SNP), folders appear.
- 4) Click on the last folder, RFP #7003294, to open the files with Appendix XI information. Additional folders have been added to provide information requested from RFP Q&As.

27. Who were the committee members who created this RFP and what is their food service background and expertise?

**Answer: The committee members consisted of RIDE staff, Nutrition and Purchasing areas.**

28. What current state model in the United States was used to create this RFP?

**Answer: There is no state model. Rhode Island is unique in that it is similar in size to some counties in other states, such as Dade County in Florida. Rhode Island is also unique in that 31 out of 36 school districts contract with FSMCs. The intent of this RFP is to seek efficiencies through statewide efforts for those school districts, while strengthening the nutrition standards for foods offered in schools.**

29. Who is going to monitor the Food service Vendors compliance with this RFP?

**Answer: There will be a change agent available to help with implementation and oversight. Once the agreement is implemented, monitoring will be through required reports and on reviews/visits (Federal and State).**

30. Why only nutrition is addressed so specifically within the RFP when traditionally contracts with vendors address additional issues such as investment, community service, scholarship creation and donations to community based and school events?

**Answer: The overriding State responsibility and Federal/State mandates relate to nutrition and accountability. Vendors should, however, feel free to include any and all issues in preparing bids.**

31. What are the criteria that will be used to address the different food preferences and needs of an urban school district in comparison to a suburban and rural school district?

**Answer: All children should be offered a variety of healthy foods.**

32. How will all of the current state and local city employees be transitioned over to the payroll of a vendor equitably taking into consideration of their pensions, pay rate and seniority?

**Answer: This will be addressed in the same manner as currently practiced.**

33. Will current union agreements be honored?

**Answer: This will be addressed in the same manner as currently practiced.**

34. Where did the sodium criteria come from and have those levels been achieved in other school districts and if so can you disclose them?

**Answer: The sodium criteria are based on the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Currently, schools are not being measured against these criteria.**

35. What is the plan to re-write the USDA recipes used in the federally funded School Nutrition program?

**Answer: All vendors should include addressing this issue in bids, if it is felt to be germane to the goals of this RFP.**

36. Was consideration given to the volume of food needed throughout the state by a limited number of food vendors such as a milk company and their ability to service an entire state?

**Answer: Since the current vendors are able to obtain sufficient foods for the State at present, obtaining similar amounts of food under a Statewide program should not be an issue.**

37. The RFP fails to address the unique food preferences of the more urban school districts in the state. How will the food preferences of these select demographics be addressed within the parameters of the sodium guidelines?

**Answer: See answer to #31.**

38. How will statewide management positions be filled?

**Answer: It is expected that FSMCs are the professionals with the business and food service expertise that can develop a plan to staff schools and identify the appropriate number of managers/directors required. There will be no additional management staff at the State level.**

39. Please define what the term "strongly encouraged" means as it relates to recruiting individual school districts to participate.

**Answer: The State's role will be that of leadership, support, and encouragement to districts (Pg 5&7). The intent is to obtain the services of a change agent to ensure the success of the recruitment effort.**

40. What criteria will be used to determine each school districts food service plan?

**Answer: Unclear on what is being asked.**

41. Will more schools be encouraged to go Universal Free for breakfast or lunch?

**Answer: This will be decided with the individual districts.**

42. Will there be a centralized office and administrative staff? How will this expense be divided amongst the school districts?

**Answer: There will be no centralized office and administrative staff at the State level. Centralized staff at the vendor level should be a business decision.**

43. Will there be a statewide mail delivery service for pertinent information that would need to be gathered and distributed?

**Answer: Vendor should include this element in bids if deemed essential to the success of the statewide program.**

44. What will the food vendor purchasing standards be for small farms?

**Answer: This will be developed during the planning stage.**

45. In light of recent issues of contaminated produce will small farms be monitored and required to have indemnity insurance?

**Answer: This is not an issue with this RFP. It is an issue for the DOH and DEM.**

### **Vendor 3**

1. Will participation in this state contract become mandatory for every school district in Rhode Island?

**Answer: This is not the intent at this time.**

2. How will the vendor be compensated during the first year of the contract as they work on State Level Activities without participating districts?

**Answer: There is no compensation for the first year.**

3. Which labor union will be recognized state wide for this process?

**Answer: Such recognition is not envisioned by the RFP. Vendors should address this issue in their bids if it is deemed essential to the implementation of this program.**

4. Page 5, Intent of the Solicitation states, "It has been found that not all districts are utilizing the resources available to them in order to offer healthier food choices, to increase student participation in the school lunch/breakfast program, and to save money on their food service program. Could you please provide the data collected pertaining to this?"

**Answer: This statement is based on different sources and is not appropriate to**

identify individual districts.

5. Why does the state reserve the right to solicit separately for selected initiatives within this scope of work if the intent is to have one state provider?

**Answer:** It is not the State's intent to solicit initiatives separately from the RFP. This is Purchasing' boiler plate language stating the State has this right. Any final contract negotiated with a vendor will clearly stipulate all terms and conditions.

6. Will the profit from one mini-contract under the state umbrella contract subsidize the loss of another mini-contract under the umbrella contract?

**Answer:** No. Each mini-contract can be customized for that individual district.

7. Appendix III addresses minimum nutrition standards for FSMC managed vending machines and a la carte sales. What standards will be in place for other vending and a la carts food sold in schools?

**Answer:** The State law and each individual school's Wellness Plan will dictate individual school/district nutrition standards for vending machines and a la Carte.

8. In Appendix X, listed under Acceptable Management Fee, what does "or percentage of meal equivalent" mean?

**Answer:** It should state, "based on cents per meal equivalent" and not percentage.

9. Could you please provide additional clarification for the last paragraph on page 13?

**Answer:** The intent is to ask vendors to identify and estimate all costs taking into account differences between individual districts.

10. On page 14 the RFP states in part, "the cost per meal cannot exceed what the district is currently paying". To our knowledge there aren't any cost per meal contracts in the state. Could you please elaborate?

**Answer:** There are charter schools that are purchasing individual meals. However, the intent is not to increase food service cost to districts beyond that which would occur on a reasonably year to year basis.

**END OF SUBMITTED QUESTIONS**

**RFP# 7003294****Title: Statewide School Food Services Program  
Pre-Bid Conference Questions - March 7, 2007 2:30 p.m.**

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1. a. Will bonds still be required?
- b. Should there be an independent price proposal?
- c. RFP was USDA approved?

Answer: 1.a. There is no change to the bonds required. A bid bond is required and a performance bond is required by the FSMC that is awarded the bid, per Federal regulations.

- 1.b. It is part of the Technical Proposal/Work Plan, Pg 13.
- 1.c. The RFP was reviewed by USDA.

2. a. Is there a guarantee that districts will join?
- b. Is there up-front planning money?
- c. Will there be state-level administrative staff?

Answer: 2.a. No, it is expected that the selected vendor will recruit districts to join (see Question #2). The State's role will be that of leadership, support and encouragement to districts (Pg 5&7). The intent is to obtain the services of a change agent to ensure the success of the recruitment effort.

- 2.b. No, there is no up-front planning money.
- 2.c. No, there will be no state-level administrative staff.

3. How much is it costing to run the state-wide school food service program?

Answer: Appendix XI - F. District Data/2 Revenue and Expenditures has the total amount of expenditures reported for each school district.

4. a. What is meant by meal rate?
- b. What is each district charging?

Answer: 4.a. This was interpreted as the meal price charged to students. The RFP acknowledges that different meal prices will be needed for different districts.

4.b. Appendix XI - F. District Data/6 District Meal Prices has the prices charged by each school district.

5. a. Do you expect cost per meal or cost reimbursable contract?
- b. Will it be cost plus fee per district?

Answer: 5.a. It is expected that this will be a cost reimbursement contract.

5.b. Yes.

6. Why wasn't an RFI considered first?

Answer: It was decided to go forward with the RFP.

7. How will proposals be evaluated fairly based on the information request in the RFP?

Answer: The proposals will be evaluated based on the technical proposal elements: 1. Contractor Understanding of the Issues, Pg 12 (25 points); 2. Work Plan, Pg 13 (40 points); 3. Capacity of the Applicant to Administer a Statewide Food Service Program, Pg 14 (15 points); 4. Quality of Key Personnel, Pg 14 (10 points); 5. Evaluation, Pg 14 (10 points).

8. Is there any chance for a state-wide school district?

Answer: No.

**9. Who owns the kitchen equipment? Trucks?**

Answer: The school districts own the kitchen equipment and currently own trucks.

**10. Will this (RFP) at the same time be mandatory for districts?**

Answer: No.

**11. Does the proposed contract supersede the SFA's contract?**

Answer: No, does not replace agreement with individual SFAs.

**12. If a district chooses to go out to bid in two years, can they?**

Answer: Yes.

**13. If a district joins in year 4, how long can the contract be for?**

Answer: Two years (year 4 and year 5 of the contract).

**14. Can the awarded vendor go into all RI districts and "hustle" to get business away non-selected vendors? Does the vendor have carte blanche to go into districts to gather information?**

Answer: The awarded vendor will work with the change agent to gather required information that will be formally presented to school districts. Protocols will be determined for in a manner that will be fair for both the new vendor and the existing vendor.

**15. Clarify how to find data on eSNACS website. Where is the folder for this RFP?**

Answer: The CNP Connect (homepage for eSNACS at <http://www.esnacs.ride.ri.gov>) has the items identified on Appendix XI. The instructions to access this information are as follows:

- 5) Login to the CNP Connect, the homepage opens. The homepage has information available for the public, no login or password required.
- 6) Click on the + sign in front of eFORMS MANAGER on the top left of the homepage.
- 7) Next click on School Nutrition Programs (SNP), folders appear.
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Additional folders have been added to provide information requested from RFP Q&As.

**16. Clarify menu in RFP.**

Answer: The menu provided in this RFP is based on current Federal nutrition standards under Assisted Nutrient Standard Menu Planning. It was meant to be a sample. The specifications in this RFP enhance the current requirements, anticipating changes necessitated by the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

**17. a. Can a District contract with the selected vendor and can the contract differ from the statewide contract?**

**b. Is the vendor responsible for oversight?**

Answer: 17.a. No, it is the intent that all district mini contracts be in accordance with the state umbrella contract.

17.b. The vendor will not be responsible for state oversight. The State will continue its oversight through the CRE process.

**18. Based on the sodium requirements in the RFP, is a district required to submit menus that meet the sodium levels requested in the proposal? How does the vendor address this?**

Answer: The vendor should demonstrate a good faith effort in trying to meet the sodium requirements, identifying the areas that need to be addressed to meet these requirements in the most cost effective manner for implementation.

19. According to Year 1, Needs Assessment (Pg 7) of the RFP, will RIDE provide oversight staff? Will RIDE work with the vendor to during the planning year while the vendor does the Needs Assessment?

Answer: Yes, RIDE will provide a change agent for oversight to help the vendor during the planning year. However, it is the vendor's responsibility to conduct the Needs Assessment.

20. According to the RFP (Pg 3), it states that the all pricing submitted will be considered firm and fixed, without any negotiation?

Answer: This is boiler plate language. However, the RFP also indicates that "unless otherwise indicated herein." This allows the body of the RFP to override this statement, which the RFP does.

21. Will RIDE work with vendor in the area of Nutrition Education?

Answer: Yes, RIDE will seek funding (i.e. Team Nutrition) that will complement the nutrition initiative outlined in this RFP for food service staff, students, parents, and school staff.

22. What about union agreements with longevity?

Answer: The vendor does not have control of this. Vendor would not be expected to re-negotiate.

23. Can school food service employees receive bonuses?

Answer: Per Federal regulations, bonuses paid from the non-profit food service account are unallowable.

24. How many districts are operated by FSMCs?

Answer: There are 30 districts operated by FSMCs. The remaining six are self-operated. The eSNACS web site (see question #15 for instructions to access FRP information on the web) has a list of all districts with their food service operation.

25. Can the deadline of this RFP be extended?

Answer: Yes, the deadline will be extended to by approximately three (3) weeks. Please see Purchasing's website for Addendum.

### Summary

The pre-bid conference provided an opportunity for vendors to ask specific questions to clarify many of the general areas in the RFP while providing RIDE/Purchasing with first-hand knowledge of the concerns of the vendors. The purpose of this RFP is to select a single-vendor that will provide a school food service program that over time will served all RI's school districts, charter schools, and State schools in a manner that will generate increased efficiencies statewide in the comprehensive operation of school food service. In addition, the major goal of this contract is to improve school meals by meeting high nutrition standards that comply with the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans for the health and well-being of RI students.

This RFP provides vendors the opportunity to showcase their creativity, child nutrition knowledge, business acumen, and food service expertise by designing their proposals to meet or exceed the goals of this RFP. The RFP expects the proposals to follow the outlined technical proposal required elements. The work plan shall be detailed enough to clearly identify the tasks addressed. The cost proposal must include only costs required to operate a statewide school food service operation with specifics to reflect individual district differences. Detailed costs must be included for reasonableness and comparison purposes.

There is a significant issue regarding the ownership of delivery trucks as separate from kitchen equipment. We acknowledge the need to address a statewide delivery plan. Currently, districts

are inadequately equipped with refrigerated trucks. As districts have a need for efficient delivery of commodities and other services, vendors are encouraged to identify in their bids the need for vendor owned trucks. We acknowledge that there will be a subsequent cost to vendors should this be deemed essential to meet the State's goals. Vendors' proposal should identify how this issue will be addressed.

The appendices provide the specifics required to develop the proposals, including nutrition criteria, nutrition education and promotion, minimum nutrition standards, purchasing criteria (food, nonfood items, and equipment), fiscal requirements (allowable and unallowable costs), and technology/data expectations. The CNP Connect (homepage for eSNACS at <http://www.esnacs.ride.ri.gov>) has the items identified on Appendix XI. The instructions to access this information are as follows:

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Lastly, the contract awarded from this RFP is an umbrella contract that will have individual contracts with each district for more specific details outlined to carry out the goals of this RFP. The contract will capitalize the advantages of economies of scale for purchases (i.e. food, equipment), sharing of resources (i.e. delivery, staffing), modeling successful food service practices in schools/districts, and reducing the administrative burden for districts in selecting a food service vendor. The contract begins July 1, 2007 and calls for a full year of planning with individual districts contracts beginning in school year 2008-09.