

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

The State of Ohio, through the Ohio Department of Education, is requesting submissions for the List of Approved Assessments from vendors for use in the 2024-2025 school year by Ohio school districts in any of the areas listed below.

1. Comparable Assessments to Ohio's K-3 Diagnostic Assessment (K-3 Diagnostic)
2. Tier 1 Dyslexia Screening Measures (Dyslexia Screener)
3. Alternative Standardized Assessments for the Third Grade Reading Guarantee (Alt Reading)
4. Alternative Standardized Assessments for Grades 3-8 (Alt 3-8) for Chartered Nonpublic Schools
5. Alternative High School Assessments for Graduation (Alt HS) for Chartered Nonpublic Schools
6. High-Quality Student Data (HQSD)
7. Gifted Prescreening and Identification (Gifted Assessment)

NOTE: Vendors may need to submit for approval even if their tests have been approved previously for use in Ohio. Please read all specifications in this Request for Qualifications (RFQ).

Pertinent Dates

The Department will make every effort to meet these dates but note that they may vary.

RFQ Issued: September 26, 2023

Vendor Call: October 12, 2023

Question Period: All questions should be submitted no later than October 13, 2023.

Notice of Intent Due: October 16, 2023

Continuation Forms Due: Vendors with assessments eligible for continuation will be notified with instructions specific to each assessment and approval.

Submissions Due: October 20, 2023, by 3:00 p.m. ET

Vendors Notified of Review Outcomes: by November 3, 2023 (Note notifications will occur on a rolling basis.)

Appeals Period: 10 business days following notification

Vendor Lists Announced: January 2024

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1 General Information

In response to stakeholder recommendations to assess students with greater efficiency and reduce time devoted to testing, the Ohio Department of Education (Department) develops a directory of assessments from which districts can choose to meet state requirements and district needs.

The purpose of this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is multifold:

- to identify assessments that can fulfill multiple purposes to the extent possible, provide high educational value and assist districts in maximizing time and resources;
- to expand the current List of Approved Assessments, identifying additional assessments for the 2024-2025 school year;
- to provide information for currently approved assessment vendors to continue on the List of Approved Assessments; and
- to outline a process for multiyear approvals.

Vendors not currently on the 2023-2024 List of Approved Assessments or those seeking approval for additional uses must submit a complete application for consideration.

1.1 Summary of Action Required

The specifics of vendors' assessments may require different actions for submission and approval by the Department. The table below summarizes these, and the RFQ provides additional detailed information.

Table 1. Action Required for List of Approved Assessments

Status	Condition	Required Action
Currently on 2023-2024 List of Approved Assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>No substantive changes</u> to assessment (e.g., same standards assessed, same administration mode); and • No changes to applicable law; and • Norming data (if required) less than 10 years old; and • Approved within last five years. 	Submit Application for Continued Approval to remain on the List of Approved Assessments for 2024-2025, with the understanding that the Department may request additional data (e.g., linking studies) as part of the review. The Department will provide this application to all approved eligible vendors.
Currently on 2023-2024 List of Approved Assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Substantive changes</u> to assessment (e.g., revised standards assessed, different administration mode); or • Changes to applicable law; or • Norming data (if required) is 10 years or older; or • Scores from the prior approved assessment have changed 	Submit a complete application with all required materials and evidence.
Currently on 2023-2024 List of Approved Assessments but seeking an additional approval for a different use.		Submit a complete application with all required materials and evidence <u>for any other additional use category</u> .
Not currently on the 2023-2024 List of Approved Assessments		Submit a complete application with all required materials and evidence.

1.2 Multiyear Approval

If newly approved for inclusion on the 2024-2025 List of Approved Assessments, vendors may also be approved for school years 2025-2026, 2026-2027, 2027-2028, and 2028-2029, contingent on the following:

- No substantive changes of the assessment have occurred since the most recent approval (or continued approval);
- No changes in legislation, law, or Department policy preclude continued approval;
- No changes in content standards or performance standards, if applicable, have occurred since the assessment was most recently approved by the Department;
- Norms, where required, are not older than 10 years;
- The vendor submits a yearly Application for Continued Approval; and
- The vendor submits a yearly vendor and product information form to ensure updated contact and cost information for districts.

Note, however, that the rights reserved for the Department in Section 1.8 of this RFQ still apply through any multiyear approvals.

1.3 Introduction to the Common Assessment RFQ

Prospective vendors must provide general information (vendor history, administration training, support needed for test administration, etc.) that helps establish that the vendor can support its product(s) if selected by local education agencies (LEAs). In addition, prospective vendors are required to submit technical information that allows the Department to determine the reliability and validity of assessment results for each proposed use. Further technical information (on alignment, linkage, norming, etc.) is required based on the use for which the vendor is applying.

1.4 Definitions

Administration training: As defined by the [Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing](#), assessment instruments should be administered by individuals who have received the training appropriate for the particular assessment being administered.

Alternative assessment: An assessment that is comparable to the current state-required assessment in terms of alignment to [Ohio's Learning Standards](#) and proficiency levels.

Alt 3-8: Alternative Standardized Assessment to Ohio's State Tests in any of the grades 3 through 8 English language arts or mathematics assessments or the grades 5 or 8 science assessments for chartered nonpublic schools.

Alt HS: Alternative High School Assessments for Graduation for [chartered nonpublic schools](#).

Alt Reading: Alternative Standardized Assessment for the Third Grade Reading Guarantee.

AUC (Area Under Receiver Operating Characteristics Curve or Area Under the Curve): A diagnostic statistic for evaluating the accuracy of predictors of education outcomes. Useful for incorporating multiple indicators, it is expressed as a value from .5 (chance accuracy) to 1.0 (perfect accuracy).

Assessment: A measure of a student's understanding of concepts and/or skills.

Checklist: An evaluative instrument designed to be administered by trained personnel. Such an instrument must have been professionally reviewed and that review published.

Cognitive demand: A scale used to measure content complexity or rigor required by a set of standards and aligned assessments.

Content alignment study: A study meeting industry-standard practices for the demonstration of content alignment considering range of knowledge and cognitive demand or depth of knowledge. A third-party independent alignment study is preferred.

Criterion referenced: A type of assessment that measures a student's knowledge and performance in relationship to a predefined set of criteria or standard body of knowledge.

Department: The Ohio Department of Education.

Depth of knowledge (DOK): A scale used to measure content complexity or rigor required by a set of standards and aligned assessments. See [levels detailed here](#).

Diagnostic: A tool for the collection and careful evaluation of detailed data based on students' knowledge and skills. The data should be used to measure and diagnose strengths and areas of need in all students and in some cases may point to the need for further assessment.

Direct Assessment: An instrument that requires students to directly perform or demonstrate a task that educators seek to evaluate (e.g., asking a student to read aloud a grade-level passage for an educator to note errors and fluency).

Dyslexia: As defined by [ORC § 3323.25\(A\)\(1\)](#), "a specific learning disorder that is neurological in origin and that is characterized by unexpected difficulties with accurate or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities not consistent with the person's intelligence, motivation, and sensory capabilities, which difficulties typically result from a deficit in the phonological component of language."

EL: English learner.

ELA: English language arts.

ESC: Educational Service Center. Regional organizations that serve as shared service providers to school districts.

Gifted: Academic: Standardized achievement tests of specific academic ability used to prescreen or identify students who are gifted.

Gifted Assessment: Prescreening and identification instruments for students who are gifted.

Gifted Checklist: Artistic: Checklists of artistic behaviors used to prescreen or identify students who are gifted.

Gifted Checklist: Creative: Checklists of creative behaviors used to prescreen or identify students who are gifted.

Gifted Identification instrument: Assessments used to determine that a student is identified as gifted in one or more defined areas.

Gifted: Intelligence: Standardized individual or group intelligence test used to prescreen or identify students who are gifted.

Gifted Prescreening instrument: Instruments used to determine that a student *is likely* to be gifted in an area in order to recommend them for further identification assessments. These tests are typically shorter and less specific than assessments used for identification.

Gifted: Rubric: Arts: An evaluation tool used to assess student displays of work, auditions, or other performances or exhibitions in the visual or performing arts in order to

identify students who are gifted. Examples of evaluation tools include but are not limited to scaled rubrics and holistic scoring criteria.

Gifted Test: Creative: Individual or group tests of creative ability used to prescreen or identify students who are gifted.

High-Quality Student Data: Instrument used by Ohio districts to measure evidence of student learning attributable to the teacher being evaluated that meets and/or exceeds State-defined criteria and guidelines.

IEP: Individualized Education Program for students with disabilities, as required under Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, that specifies individually determined accommodations and student supports required for assessments.

Item Response Theory (IRT): As defined by the [Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing](#), a mathematical model of the functional relationship between performance on a test item, the test item's characteristics, and the test taker's standing on the construct being measured.

JVSD: Joint Vocational School District.

K-3 Diagnostic: Comparable assessments to Ohio's K-3 Diagnostic Assessments. The K-3 Diagnostic serves as a screener, providing an on track/not on track score to indicate whether students continuing their current rate of progress are likely to meet the promotion score on Ohio's State Test for grade 3 English language arts.

LEA: Local education agency, including city, exempted village, or local school districts; joint vocational school districts (JVSDs); community (charter) schools; science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) schools; state-supported schools; or chartered nonpublic schools in the State of Ohio.

Linking study: A study conducted according to industry standards to demonstrate comparability between scores and subscores for any assessment proposed as an alternative to an existing assessment, such as the Ohio State Tests.

Nationally representative sample: A sample of students that represents the United States population in terms of gender, ethnicity, geography, disability, and other relevant variables.

Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS): A multistate-developed set of K-12 science content standards.

Norm-referenced: A type of assessment that measures a student's knowledge and performance in relationship to that of other students, typically students of the same age or grade.

On Track/Not on Track for Reading: The designation given to students at the beginning of each grade, kindergarten-grade 3, to indicate if they are reading at the level set by

[Ohio's Learning Standards](#) for the end of the previous grade (e.g., grade 1 on track designation based on end-of-kindergarten standards).

OAC: Ohio Administrative Code.

Ohio's Learning Standards (OLS): The [Ohio's Learning Standards](#) adopted pursuant to Ohio Revised Code section 3301.079.

ORC: Ohio Revised Code.

OST: Ohio's State Tests. Assessments given for the purposes of federal and state requirements and/or accountability to measure student achievement or growth in knowledge and skills related to [Ohio's Learning Standards](#). These include but are not limited to grades 3-8 ELA and mathematics assessments, grades 5 and 8 science assessments, and the high school end-of-course assessments.

Range of knowledge: The span of knowledge required by a set of content standards to which an assessment instrument aligns.

Reliability: The overall consistency of a measure under consistent conditions.

Research-based: A concept or strategy that is derived from or informed by objective evidence.

RFQ: Request for Qualifications. A tool used by the Department to identify one or more providers who meet a specified set of requirements.

Sensitivity: Sensitivity of a dyslexia screener refers to the screener's ability to correctly identify students as at risk of dyslexia who are later diagnosed as being dyslexic. Sensitivity is computed as the number of true positives divided by the number of true positives plus the number of false negatives: $TP / [TP+FN]$.

Specificity: Specificity of a dyslexia screener refers to the screener's ability to correctly identify students as not at risk of dyslexia who are not dyslexic. Specificity is calculated as the number of true negatives divided by the number of true negatives plus false positives: $TN / [TN+FP]$.

Tier 1 Dyslexia Screening Measure: An instrument used for universal screening to identify students at risk for dyslexia. Instruments are brief direct measures of essential literacy skills given by classroom teachers with support of other educators. Instruments should also be appropriate for monitoring progress or response to instruction in areas of risk.

Validity: The extent to which an assessment accurately measures what it is intended to measure.

Vendor: A provider of products and/or services or a developer of assessments. For purposes of this RFQ, the vendor would provide products and/or services to an LEA under a separate contract.

1.5 Assessments Included in RFQ

Vendors are invited to submit instruments to be considered for any of the following uses by schools in the state of Ohio.

1.5.1 Comparable Assessments to Ohio’s K-3 Diagnostic Assessment (K-3 Diagnostic)
 In compliance with [Ohio Revised Code \(ORC\) section 3313.608\(B\)\(1\)](#), the Department seeks comparable assessments to Ohio’s K-3 Diagnostic Assessment. Approved assessments may be used by school districts to determine that a student is on track or is not on track in reading. For additional information, see [Diagnostic Assessments](#).

1.5.2 Tier 1 Dyslexia Screening Measures (Dyslexia Screener)
 In compliance with [ORC § 3323.251](#), the Department seeks instruments for universal screening to identify students at risk for dyslexia based on direct assessment of performance in each of key areas listed below. For additional information, see [Dyslexia Information and Support](#).

Table 2. Key Assessed Areas for Dyslexia Screening

Skill to screen	Grade			
	K	1	2	3-6
Phonemic Awareness	X	X		
Letter Naming	X	X		
Letter-Sound Correspondence	X (midyear)	X	X (through beginning of grade 2)	
Real and Nonword Reading	X (end of year only and only nonwords)	X (real words starting midyear)	X (nonwords through beginning of grade 2)	
Oral Text Reading Accuracy and Rate		X starting in midyear	X	X
Comprehension				X

1.5.3 Alternative Standardized Assessments for Third Grade Reading Guarantee (Alt Reading)

In compliance with [ORC § 3313.608\(A\)\(2\)\(c\)](#), the Department seeks alternative standardized reading assessments comparable to the reading portion of the grade 3 ELA OST. Providers responding to this RFQ need to demonstrate alignment with the reading subscore scale of that test.

1.5.4 Alternative Standardized Assessments for Grades 3-8 (Alt 3-8) for Chartered Nonpublic Schools

[ORC § 3301.0711\(K\)](#) allows certain chartered nonpublic schools to use state-approved alternative assessments in place of the Ohio State Tests for tested grades and content areas. The Department seeks assessments that have internal consistency reliability coefficients of at least 0.8; are standardized; have specific evidence of content, concurrent, or criterion validity; measure student achievement in core academic areas; and have high validity evidenced by the alignment of the assessment with Ohio's Learning Standards or NGSS and demonstrate scoring equivalence with Ohio's Limited, Basic, Proficient, Accomplished (formerly called Accelerated), and Advanced levels.

Note: The Ohio State Test in English Language Arts at grade 3 has a high-stakes component for students. A demonstration of equivalence to the OST requires an additional demonstration of alignment and linkage to the reading subscore scale of the OST. For more information, see [Third Grade Reading Guarantee](#).

1.5.5 Alternative High School Assessments for Graduation (Alt HS) for Chartered Nonpublic Schools

In compliance with [ORC § 3313.619](#), the Department seeks nationally norm-referenced assessments that have internal consistency reliability coefficients of at least 0.8; are standardized; have specific evidence of content, concurrent, or criterion validity; have evidence of norming studies in the previous 10 years; have a measure of student achievement in core academic areas; and have high validity evidenced by the alignment of the assessment with nationally recognized content. Assessments must provide scores equivalent to Ohio's Limited, Basic, Proficient, Accomplished (formerly called Accelerated), and Advanced. In addition, Algebra I and ELA II tests must also provide a score equivalent to Ohio's Competency Score, which is between the Basic and Proficient Performance Levels. (See [Ohio's Graduation Requirements](#).)

1.5.6 High-Quality Student Data (HQSD)

The Department seeks assessments for Preschool-12 in various subjects that meet the state's technical requirements. These assessments will provide high-quality student data to demonstrate teacher-attributable learning. [See [ORC § 3319.112\(B\)\(2\)](#).] Assessments must measure student mastery of content in their tested area and grade level.

1.5.7 Gifted: Prescreening and Identification (Gifted Assessment)

In compliance with [ORC § 3324.01](#) and [ORC § 3324.02](#), the Department seeks valid and reliable assessment tools for school districts (not including JVSDs) to use for the prescreening and identification of students who are gifted. Assessments approved for **prescreening only** cannot be used for the identification of students who are gifted.

The Department seeks the following types of assessment instruments:

- Individual or group standardized intelligence tests (Gifted: Intelligence);
- Individual or group standardized tests of specific academic ability (Gifted: Academic);

- Individual or group tests of creative ability (Gifted: Creative);
- Checklists of artistic behaviors (Gifted Checklist: Artistic);
- Checklists of creative behaviors (Gifted Checklist: Creative); and
- Visual or performing arts rubrics (Gifted: Arts Rubric).

Additional information about gifted student identification is available at [Gifted Screening and Identification](#).

1.6 Eligible Applicants

To the extent authorized by law, entities eligible to apply include but are not limited to the following:

- Private for-profit companies including but not limited to test publishers and research organizations;
- Nonprofit organizations; and
- Institutions of higher education.

Each approved provider will be responsible for all contracts with individual districts. The contracts between an approved provider and districts shall not contradict the terms and requirements set forth in this RFQ. Selection denotes eligibility only. No contract with the Department, or any other entity, is implied by eligibility selection.

Applicants acknowledge that their eligibility is not guaranteed once they are identified as an approved provider by the Department. Changes made to federal law or state law impacting the need and/or requirements for the above-listed assessments may affect the approved provider's future eligibility.

1.7 Reservation of Rights

The Department reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all proposals received in response or application to this RFQ;
- Grant limited approval of assessments (e.g., approving some but not all uses, and/or some but not all grade levels or content areas);
- Withdraw the RFQ at any time;
- Disqualify any provider for failing to conform to the requirements of the RFQ;
- During the application period, amend the RFQ specifications to correct errors or oversights, or to supply additional information, as it becomes available;
- During the application period, direct providers to submit application modifications addressing subsequent RFQ amendments;
- Change any of the scheduled dates;
- Waive any requirements in this RFQ;
- Require clarification at any time during the application process and/or require correction of errors to assure a full and complete understanding of a provider's

application and/or to determine a provider's compliance with the requirements of the RFQ;

- Prioritize evaluation and/or approval of certain submissions;
- Request accurate and current estimates of provider costs;
- Post cost estimates for approved providers on the Department's website;
- Reevaluate approval or request other documentation during or after the approval process; and
- Evaluate and modify future processes for determining Department-approved assessment lists.

1.8 Confidential, Proprietary and Trade Secret Information

The Department solicits information through this RFQ in a transparent manner and in accordance with the laws of the State of Ohio. All responses provided to the Department become records of the Department and as such will be open to inspection by the public after award unless exempt from disclosure under law. If an applicant believes information in its proposal is a trade secret, as defined in ORC § 1333.61, **the information must be marked as such by underlining the information and notating it with asterisks**. Because the applicant is in a better position to know which information may be a trade secret, the applicant's marking of such information will aid the Department in its review of the documents when responding to a request for public records under Ohio law. The Department has the sole discretion in redacting information in response to public records requests pursuant to ORC § 149.43.

1.9 Vendor Call

The Department will convene an online session for prospective applicants. This call is intended to provide any assistance on the submission process, including the Vendor Submission Tool and appendices. This call is scheduled for **October 12, 2023**. Participation is optional, but registration is required. Use this registration link: <https://outlook.office365.com/owa/calendar/OhioDepartmentofEducationOfficeofAssessment@ohiodas.onmicrosoft.com/bookings/>. The link to join the meeting will be provided after registration. Submission of written questions in advance of the call is preferred. The Department encourages prospective applicants to submit questions in advance of the vendor call so that they may be addressed during the call.

2 General Submission Requirements

Documentation of the following is required from all applicants. **Please use the forms provided where indicated.**

2.1 Vendor Information

Use Vendor Information Form ([Appendix C](#)). Information provided must include prior experience in delivery of assessment services and a description of the organizational structure (staffing, supervision, location, etc.) that supports the organization in this work.

In addition, documentation of capacity to provide assessment services, e.g., an estimate of the number of LEAs the vendor could serve, or maximum number of student assessments it could provide, or other appropriate documentation must be provided. There are approximately 600 public school districts, 50 JVSDs, 350 community (charter) schools, 720 chartered nonpublic schools, and 50 ESCs in the State of Ohio.

2.1.1 References

On the Vendor Information Form ([Appendix C](#)), applicants must provide information from three references (names, titles, organizations, addresses, phone numbers and email addresses) that contracted for similar services within the past two years. A brief summary of these services must be provided.

2.1.2 Overview of Services to Be Posted

If approved, each vendor must provide a public information summary of services for posting on the Department's website by completing the Assessment Information Form. A link to the form will be provided to vendors of approved assessments to submit this information online. Information about assessments and instruments under continued or multiyear approval will also be published online. A link will be provided to eligible vendors with their Application for Continued Approval.

2.1.3 Service Provider Assurances and Signature

The Service Provider Assurances and Signature must be completed and signed. See Service Provider Assurances and Signature ([Appendix B](#)).

2.1.4 Cost Information

If approved, providers will be asked to provide a link or other up-to-date contact information for use by districts in evaluating any costs associated with assessments under consideration for purchase. This information should be provided in the Assessment Information Form and will be published as part of the summary of services on the Department's website to inform districts as they evaluate their assessment options.

2.1.5 Transmittal Letter

An authorized individual must provide a brief transmittal letter to the Department to formally submit/transmit the application, proposal, and other materials on behalf of the applying entity. The transmittal letter must be signed and dated by the authorized individual.

3 Technical Submission Requirements

Prospective vendors are required to submit technical information that allows the Department to determine the reliability and validity of assessment results for their proposed uses. Further technical information (on alignment, linkage, norming, etc.) is required to evaluate whether the test is appropriate for the use for which the vendor is applying.

3.1 Technical Report or Manual

Every applicant must submit a technical report or manual for each assessment or checklist. (Note: The Gifted Arts Rubric does not require a technical report, but vendors should supply as much technical information as available.) Technical reports must include discussion of the following as they apply to their instrument:

- Test development;
- Test blueprint;
- Description of scoring method and standard setting;
- Evidence of reliability;
- Item difficulty;
- Item discrimination;
- Scoring reliability;
- Item calibration;
- Item fit;
- Bias (differential item functioning);
- Vertical scale;
- Evidence of validity for each of the intended purposes;
- Appropriate interpretation of scores;
- A description of the IRT model used; and
- Evidence that resulting scores are equivalent across forms or test versions.

The report must also provide information regarding the entity and specific evaluators who compiled the report. The report may be supplemented with additional information as needed.

3.2 Content Alignment Study

A content alignment study must be provided for many assessments and include the following:

- A description of the range of knowledge (within [Ohio's Learning Standards](#) or to national content for the ALT HS assessments or NGSS 2013 Release for Alt 3-8 Science) to which alignment is referenced;
- A description of the methodology used to determine content alignment;
- A determination of the degree to which the assessment aligns to the cognitive demand or depth of knowledge of the specific standards;
- A statement of the percentage or degree of alignment between the assessment (and any subscores, if applicable) and the assessed range of knowledge;
 - A minimum alignment of 50% is required for the K-3 Diagnostic, Alt Reading, Alt 3-8 ELA, and Math assessments.
 - A minimum alignment of 80% is required for the Alt 3-8 Science assessments with inclusion of all domains.
- Alt ELA Assessments at grade 3 must demonstrate alignment with the reading subscores of Ohio's State Test; and

- Adherence to specific requirements for the particular use for which approval is being sought as described elsewhere in this RFQ.

The study and its methodology must meet industry-standard practices for the demonstration of content alignment. A third-party independent alignment study is preferred.

The assessments for the following areas require an alignment study:

- K-3 Diagnostic;
- Alt Reading;
- Alt 3-8;
- Alt HS. and
- HQSD.

3.3 Norming Study

Norm-referenced assessments must include a national norming study that meets the following criteria (see section 7 in the vendor tool for exact requirements):

- Norming data are less than 10 years old;
- Norming sample represents the student population in the nation in gender, ethnicity, free or reduced-price lunch eligibility, EL, IEP, and/or gifted as appropriate for the intended use;
- Sample is composed of students from all the regions of the nation without a single region dominating the sample, within a region without a single state dominating the sample disproportionately; and from Ohio proportionally represented;
- Sample size is sufficiently large to produce stable norming results: more than 5,000 on average across grades/subjects, with no grade/subject fewer than 1,000, subject to good representation of student population nationally (or a number judged by the reviewers sufficient based on the size of the population to be tested), per test nationally for general achievement tests; and
- Data of the norming study should be from a limited time frame so the results are considered comparable. Data of spring results and fall results are not directly comparable, even if they are from the same grade in the same school year. A separate norm is necessary for each administration (fall, winter, spring).

The assessments for the following areas require a norming study:

- Alt HS;
- Gifted: Academic; and
- Gifted: Intelligence.

Note that if norms are gender-based, the Department may request additional information, e.g., on ramifications for use as a gifted indicator, validity.

3.4 Test Blueprint

Test blueprints must be provided for assessments and are expected to address the following:

- Item distribution by content and item type;
- Complexity (depth of knowledge, cognitive taxonomy, etc.);
- Number of items and points by reporting category;
- Scoring and reporting of results; and
- Any tools required/allowed for use by students during test administration.

3.5 Linking Study

A linking study is required for Alt Reading, Alt 3-8, and Alt HS assessments. (A linking study must be provided for any assessment considered to be comparable to an existing OST.) Studies undertaken by an independent third-party entity are preferred and must address comparability of both content and scoring. At a minimum, the linking study must meet industry standards. The linking study must include a concordance table that demonstrates equivalence between scores of the proposed assessment to the comparable Ohio test. Alt Reading and Alt ELA for grade 3 must demonstrate concordance with reading subscores.

Element 5 of the Vendor Submission Tool outlines the technical requirements for linking studies.

For any new Alt Reading and Alt ELA at grade 3 applications, vendors must submit a linking study utilizing data from the reading subscore from the OST in grade 3 English language arts from no earlier than school year 2016-2017, primarily from the spring administration. Each study must describe in detail the process and population studied. This includes the number and names of districts and schools, the number of students within those districts and schools, a summary of the demographic data of the students provided, and a summary of representativeness of the sample.

Alt HS assessments of Algebra I and ELA II must include a competency score equivalent to that set by the Department.

3.6 Test Administration Manual

Applicants must provide a test administration manual for each assessment. This manual should include information regarding the testing window (if pertinent), specific details regarding how the test is to be administered (e.g., online, paper and pencil, time required for administration), and by whom (e.g., trained or otherwise specially qualified test administrators). The following represent some best practices in test administration:

- Students have enough time to complete the assessment.
- The assessment includes clear directions for students.
- There are systematic administration procedures provided, along with training and/or resources for those who administer the assessment.

- Training is provided to ensure consistent use when rubrics or other scoring guidelines exist.
- There is suggested protocol to ensure that teachers would not be grading assessments of their own students.
- There is a suggested protocol to ensure that multiple scorers would be recommended for items that are not selected response.

3.7 Description of Test Security Measures

Security measures have two aims. First, they must be adequate to protect the integrity of the assessment instrument and all forms and administrations. Second, per [ORC § 3301.0714](#) and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA, 34 CFR Part 99), standards must be met for strict safeguards to protect the confidentiality of personally identifiable student data.

A description of test security measures may be included within the Test Administration Manual. If it is not, a separate document must be submitted providing evidence of measures to address the assessment security, threat assessment, and/or test/item exposure. Documentation shall include the following:

- Safeguards to ensure confidentiality of personally identifiable student data; and
- Measures to prevent access to forms in advance of administration for tests using forms; or
- Methods to prevent advance or excessive item exposure for tests that are computer-adaptive or generated (particularly those allowing multiple or on-demand administrations).

3.8 Sample Test Forms with Sample Test Items and Score Report(s)

Sample score reports must contain only nonidentifiable student information. Sample reports must include associated guidance on assessment score interpretation. Reports should include district-, classroom-, grade-, and school-level summaries along with other reports and comparisons as appropriate. Sample items should reflect content areas and grade levels as appropriate and demonstrate content alignment and either depth of knowledge or cognitive demand.

3.9 Additional/Supplemental Information

The technical report or manual and studies may be augmented by authoritative evidence such as studies published in peer-reviewed journals or other independent sources.

3.10 Submission Format

All applicable elements listed on the Vendor Submission Tool require the submission of relevant documentation with supporting evidence. Elements are noted as applicable by “Required” on the Submission Tool. For each applicable element listed on the Vendor Submission Tool ([Appendix D](#)), applicants must specify the name of the relevant document and location (using sequential page numbering within the single submission

document) where the supporting evidence is found. **Vendors should not use the notes section of the Vendor Submission Tool for explanations in place of documentation.**

Applicants are asked to provide highly specific location guidance pointing to specific information using **specific page number references** in addition to naming the document. Page number references should be specific and take readers directly to the required information. Use of broad page ranges leads to confusion and the possibility that the required criteria element will not be found. Individual documents must be combined for submission into a single document with **sequential numbering** throughout. The vendor response must include a table of contents with document titles and page numbers. Bookmarks are helpful but not required.

Use of a single document with sequential numbering enables the Department's readers to search for information within the document. This is helpful if the location provided doesn't match exactly with what is needed for a particular element.

4 Application Procedures

4.1 Application Timeline

All times referenced in this RFQ are Eastern Time.

Please make every effort to submit questions before the vendor call so that they may be addressed during the call. Email questions to ApprovedAssessments@education.ohio.gov and copy peggy.sorensen@education.ohio.gov. Following the vendor call, questions and responses will be posted to the Department's website.

A vendor call will be held on **October 12, 2023**. Vendors may register for the call at <https://outlook.office365.com/owa/calendar/OhioDepartmentofEducationOfficeofAssessment@ohiodas.onmicrosoft.com/bookings/>. Questions will also be accepted at that time.

The Department requests that a nonbinding notice of intent ([Appendix A](#)) to apply for inclusion on the 2024-2025 List of Approved Assessments be provided to the Department no later than **October 16, 2023**. The notice should list each assessment and the assessment purposes for which inclusion is sought. This notice is not mandatory but will assist the Department in planning the review. The notice must be emailed to ApprovedAssessments@education.ohio.gov.

All required application materials must be received by the Department by **October 20, 2023, at 3:00 p.m.** for assessments to be considered for use in the 2024-2025 school year. This deadline applies to the submission of complete applications with required materials and evidence as well as to the submission of a request to remain on the List of Approved Assessments. Submissions received after the due date and time will not be accepted unless requested by the Department.

4.2 Application Submission Method

Applicants must provide a single, sequentially page-numbered PDF document containing all application materials, supplemental materials, and attachments. The document must include a table of contents. Applicants may include links to certain online materials, such as research published in peer-reviewed journals, as a portion of the application and are responsible for ensuring that all links are current and live. **Links to vendor websites, Google docs, or SharePoint sites are not acceptable.**

In addition, applicants must provide the completed Vendor Submission Tool as an active Excel document and also submit a PDF of this same tool. Application materials must be submitted digitally via a File Drop. Vendors will be provided access and instructions following submission of a Notice of Intent to Submit Application ([Appendix A](#)). Vendors having questions or needing assistance with submission may contact noel.nethers@education.ohio.gov.

4.3 Applicant Checklist

[Appendix E](#) provides an optional checklist that may be used to ensure a complete application and that all required materials are submitted.

4.4 Evaluation Process

All complete and timely submissions will be evaluated by at least three qualified reviewers selected by the Department, using the Vendor Submission Tool and any specific documentation pertinent to the assessment and uses being considered. The Vendor Submission Tool uses two scoring categories to indicate compliance across multiple requirements. Each element will be scored according to the following categories:

- Y: Adequate Evidence: submitted documentation demonstrates that the assessment meets minimum requirements.
- N: Incomplete Evidence: submitted documentation fails to demonstrate compliance with minimum requirements.

In rare instances, a criteria element may not be applicable to a specific instrument. In that case, the element will receive an N/A for Not Applicable and the reason for that determination will be noted.

Evidence for Technical Documentation items may also be judged adequate by substantially meeting requirements to allow reviewers broader discretion in making professional judgments regarding the quality of data submitted across multiple grades or content areas. The Department may approve some but not all uses, and/or some but not all grade levels or content areas. In the case of assessment packages, decisions may be made in determining specific uses by form or subtest. This is particularly true of assessments used for gifted prescreening and identification.

For any items determined to have “Incomplete Evidence,” the vendor will receive explanatory notes from the Department. On completion of the review, scoring summaries

including reviewer notes will be returned to any vendors having Incomplete Evidence in any category.

4.5 Appeals Process

Any vendor who wishes to appeal the initial determination will have one opportunity to appeal with additional information or clarification on where the needed information is in the original vendor response. This applies to cases (as above) where the Department believes the vendor submitted Incomplete Evidence in any category.

The vendor must email the appeal with supporting documentation to ApprovedAssessments@education.ohio.gov no later than 10 business days following notice of Incomplete Evidence. [Appendix F](#) must be included in the appeal for each incomplete item. Specific references (evidence and page number) to previously submitted documentation must be included if applicable and to any new documentation submitted as well.

4.6 Appeals Review

The Department will evaluate all appeal requests and notify vendors of the final determination along with reasons for the decision immediately following posting the assessment list on the Department website.

The review will be completed in two stages:

1. The Department will select expert reviewers to review the request and all supporting documentation. Reviewers will have access to all materials originally submitted by the vendor. A team lead will document the recommendations based on the consensus of reviewers.
2. The Department's Senior Leadership will review all recommendations and make a final determination on the appeal.

4.7 Posting of List of Approved Assessments

Vendors with approved assessments will receive a link to complete the Assessment Information Form to provide updated contact and assessment information. This summary of services will be posted as a link from the List of Approved Assessments for the convenience of districts in decision-making.

For the ease of districts in making assessment selections to best meet their needs, the Department prefers to include each assessment individually on the List of Approved Assessments. There may be exceptions for assessments marketed only as a package (no individual purchase). The list is a downloadable spreadsheet with sorting functionality to allow districts to search easily by approval area or vendor name.

5 Appendices

5.1 [Appendix A](#): Notice of Intent to Submit Application

5.2 [Appendix B](#): Service Provider Assurances and Signature

5.3 [Appendix C](#): Vendor Information

5.4 [Appendix D](#): Vendor Submission Tool Instructions

5.5 [Appendix E](#): Applicant Checklist

5.6 [Appendix F](#): Appeal of Finding of Incomplete Evidence