



## Mississippi Department of Education

Lynn J House, Ph.D. Interim State Superintendent of Education

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### Office of Student Assessment

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To Whom It May Concern:

The purpose of this letter is to give Assessment Solutions Group (ASG) my highest recommendation. The Mississippi Department of Education contracted with ASG to provide a variety of services in 2012-13 as the state was in the process of letting an RFP to combine the work of two separate contracts and move the state towards an online assessment system for our non-PARCC assessments. These services consisted of writing the RFP for assessment services and evaluating the technical and cost proposals from the different vendors responding to the RFP. In each instance, we found ASG's work to be first rate and extremely valuable to MDE in our procurement process.

Specifically, we used ASG to draft an RFP to combine assessment services related to our elementary and middle school science assessments and our high school end of course assessments. Since a key component of the RFP was migrating all of these assessments to be delivered online, the RFP was quite detailed and complex. ASG understood the detailed requirements and drafted an RFP that offered the right balance of specific program requirements and vendor solution flexibility. Having ASG write the RFP saved us significant staff time and resulted in a clear RFP for both vendors and our evaluators.

We also used ASG to evaluate the technical and cost proposals submitted by the different vendors responding to the RFP. Again, we found ASG's work in this area to be exemplary. Including ASG's cost sheets in the RFP allowed us to evaluate each vendor's cost submission and informed us whether the vendor: a) clearly understood the program, b) was bidding "apples to apples" solutions in comparison to other vendors and c) was submitting appropriate pricing for the work they were proposing to perform.

Perhaps the largest compliment I can pay to ASG is that we issued our RFP on time and received clear and detailed responses from the vendors, and most importantly, the submitted prices for all vendors came in within a range of 2%-14% of ASG's cost model estimates. Using ASG's pricing analysis we were able to negotiate more favorable pricing terms with the selected vendor which helped us to save millions of dollars over the course of the contract.

I highly recommend ASG's services to all states.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. H. Mason", written over a light gray rectangular background.

James H. Mason  
State Assessment Director