



DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES
OFFICE OF STATE PROCUREMENT SERVICES
 STATE OF MAINE

PROCUREMENT JUSTIFICATION FORM (PJF)

This form must accompany all contract requests and sole source requisitions (RQS) over \$5,000 submitted to the Office of State Procurement Services.

INSTRUCTIONS: Please provide the requested information in the white spaces below. All responses (except signatures) must be typed; no hand-written forms will be accepted. See the guidance document posted with this form on the Procurement Services intranet site (Forms page) for additional instructions.

PART I: OVERVIEW			
Department Office/Division/Program:		Education/Office of Federal Programs	
Department Contract Administrator or Grant Coordinator:		Janette Kirk, Chief of Federal Programs	
(If applicable) Department Reference #:		N/A	
Amount: (Contract/Amendment/Grant)	\$10,016,762.00	Advantage CT / RQS #:	20201218*1904
CONTRACT	Proposed Start Date:		Proposed End Date:
AMENDMENT	Original Start Date:	2/24/2021	Effective Date:
	Previous End Date:	6/30/2025	New End Date:
GRANT	Project Start Date:		Grant Start Date:
	Project End Date:		Grant End Date:
Vendor/Provider/Grantee Name, City, State:		Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Portland, OR	
Brief Description of Goods/Services/Grant:		Pre-K–12 assessments and professional learning offerings to support student learning.	

PART II: JUSTIFICATION FOR VENDOR SELECTION			
Check the box below for the justification(s) that applies to this request. (Check all that apply.)			
<input type="checkbox"/>	A. Competitive Process	<input type="checkbox"/>	G. Grant
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	B. Amendment	<input type="checkbox"/>	H. State Statute/Agency Directed
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	C. Single Source/Unique Vendor	<input type="checkbox"/>	I. Federal Agency Directed
<input type="checkbox"/>	D. Proprietary/Copyright/Patents	<input type="checkbox"/>	J. Willing and Qualified
<input type="checkbox"/>	E. Emergency	<input type="checkbox"/>	K. Client Choice
<input type="checkbox"/>	F. University Cooperative Project	<input type="checkbox"/>	L. Other Authorization

Please respond to ALL of the questions in the following sections.

PART III: SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

1. Provide a more detailed description and explain the need for the goods, services or grant to supplement the response in Part I.

This amendment is to extend the current contract with NWEA for a statewide assessment in English and math for an additional two years.

The original contract with NWEA was a direct response to the national emergency as declared by the President of the United States under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to protect the health and safety of students, staff, and our communities and subsequent civil state of emergency by Governor Janet Mills within the state of Maine. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic put significant stress on student learning and educators statewide. There was an immediate need to ascertain levels of student performance including the identification of current student strengths and areas of challenge to pivot, revise and implement varied instructional strategies to meet student’s needs on an individualized basis.

Maine shifted to the implementation of the NWEA assessment statewide, providing immediate and actionable data. This decision was based on feedback from Maine educators on their need and that many school administrative units (SAUs) already had NWEA for Map Growth. After the initial period of the contract, the Department worked with NWEA to design and implement a through year approach that would meet federal requirements and continue to provide assessment data in a timely manner. All 278 of Maine’s public School Administrative Units (SAUs) are now implementing the NWEA assessment a minimum of twice per year.

The Department released an RFP in late 2024 to acquire a new statewide assessment, however, two main issues arose. First, review of the proposals received revealed gaps in the RFP document itself which resulted in proposals that did not best meet the needs of Maine schools. It was determined the best course of action was to cancel the RFP and work to improve the RFP rather than go with a product that would not meet the needs of the State of Maine.

Second, as the current assessment is only in year 2 of operational I implementation, there is not a trend line that can adequately tell the story of Maine students. The lack of trend line is detrimental to the Department and to the education field as it creates challenges to conduct trends analysis and supports and will impede the development and availability of longitudinal data. Additionally, there has been significant feedback from the field about how this places a burden on educators and to switch assessments again will further exacerbate disruption and increase inconsistency. Maine has experienced four (4) assessments over the course of the past ten years (NECAP, Smarter Balanced, eMPowerME/SAT, and NWEA). At this time, the field needs consistency. The additional two years will provide the needed consistency and establish a useful trend line.

2. Provide a brief justification for the selected vendor to supplement the response in Part II. Reference the RFP number, if applicable.

NWEA is the current vendor for the statewide assessment and as such are the only provider that can continue the current statewide assessment.

PART III: SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

3. Explain how the negotiated costs or rates are fair and reasonable; or how the funding was allocated to grantee.

The costs outlined below were derived from a proposal outlining costs associated with embedded professional learning, standard-setting & benchmarking processes and protocols, licensing fees, psychometric review etc. These costs were deemed reasonable for the scope of the assessment and the number of students participating.

Year 1 associated costs of approximately = \$4,934,365.00

Year 2 associated costs of approximately = \$5,082,397.00

4. Describe the plan for future competition for the goods or services.

The Department is committed to releasing an RFP for these services in 2025 or early 2026. The Department is currently working to review and revise the RFP that was released in 2024; however, this will involve conversations and feedback from around the state, which will take time.

PART IV: AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA) / MAINE JOBS & RECOVERY PLAN (MJRP)

Does this request utilize ARPA/MJRP funds?

Yes, MJRP funds (023) – If Yes, please attach the approved Business Case(s).

Yes, ARPA funds (025) – If Yes, please be aware of the requirements from awarding federal agencies.

No – If No, proceed to Part V.

PART V: CONFLICTS OF INTEREST (COI); CONTRACT WITH THE STATE

Maine law contains Conflict of Interest statutes directed to State Departments, State Officers, and Employees Generally under MRS [Title 5, §18](#) and [§18-A](#), in harmony with MRS [Title 17, §3104](#).

The requesting department signatory understands and acknowledges Maine’s Conflict of Interest statutes.

PART VI: APPROVALS

The signatures below indicate approval of this procurement request.

Signature of requesting Department’s Commissioner (or designee):		
Typed Name:	Pender Makin, Commissioner	Date: 6/12/2025

Signature of DAFS Procurement Official:	DocuSigned by: <i>Joseph Zrioka</i> EA813178102243C...		
Typed Name:	Joseph A. Zrioka	Date:	8/13/2025

NOI 0820250796 08/20/2025 - 08/26/2025

Certificate Of Completion

Envelope Id: ACFCCB4E-C65D-4FB8-B25C-BAFF2FB95941	Status: Completed
Subject: Complete with DocuSign: ITP-254937 NWEA PJF.pdf	
Source Envelope:	
Document Pages: 4	Signatures: 1
Certificate Pages: 5	Initials: 0
AutoNav: Enabled	Envelope Originator: marcello genovese marcello.genovese@maine.gov
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Joseph Zrioka
Joseph.A.Zrioka@maine.gov
Director of IT Procurement
State of Maine - Office of Information Technology
Security Level: Email, Account Authentication
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Katherine Warren
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Education Data Manager- MDOE
Maine Department of Education
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To let us know of a change in your email address where we should send notices and disclosures electronically to you, you must send an email message to us at kendra.l.coates@maine.gov and in the body of such request you must state: your previous email address, your new email address. We do not require any other information from you to change your email address.

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