ext	**GUILFORD COUNTY SCHOOLS** **Request for Proposals** **Purchasing Department** **501 W. Washington Street** **Greensboro, NC 27401**
Direct all inquiries to:	**Request for Proposals: 6331**
Velicia Moore	**Bid due date: June 30, 2021**
gaddyv@gcsnc.com / 336.370.3240	**Commodity: Transportation Routing Software**

NOTICE TO BIDDERS

Proposals, subject to the conditions made a part hereof, will be received at this office 501 W. Washington St., Greensboro NC 27401, until **2:00 PM EST** on the day of opening for furnishing and delivering the commodity as described herein. Proposals submitted via facsimile (FAX) machine in response to this Request for Proposals **will not** be accepted.

EXECUTION

In compliance with this Request for Proposals (RFP), and subject to all the conditions herein, the undersigned Vendor offers and agrees to furnish and deliver any or all items upon which prices are proposed, at the prices set opposite each item within the time specified herein. By executing this proposal, the undersigned Vendor certifies that this proposal is submitted competitively and without collusion (G.S. 143-54), that none of its officers, directors, or owners of an unincorporated business entity has been convicted of any violations of Chapter 78A of the General Statutes, the Securities Act of 1933, or the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (G.S. 143-59.2), and that it is not an ineligible Vendor as set forth in G.S. 143-59.1. False certification is a Class I felony. Furthermore, by executing this proposal, the undersigned certifies to the best of Vendor's knowledge and belief, that it and its principals are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from covered transactions by any Federal or State department or agency. As required by G.S. 143-48.5, the undersigned vendor certifies that it, and each of its sub-Contractors for any Contract awarded as a result of this RFP, complies with the requirements of Article 2 of Chapter 64 of the NC General Statutes, including the requirement for each employer with more than 25 employees in North Carolina to verify the work authorization of its employees through the federal E-Verify system.

Failure to execute/sign proposal prior to submittal shall render proposal invalid and it WILL BE REJECTED. Late proposals will not be accepted.

BIDDER:		FEDERAL ID OR SOCIAL SECURITY NO.	
STREET ADDRESS:		P.O. BOX:	ZIP:
CITY & STATE & ZIP:		TELEPHONE NUMBER:	FAX NUMBER:
TYPE OR PRINT NAME & TITLE OF PERSON SIGNING:		TITLE	
AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE:	DATE:	E-MAIL:	

Offer valid for 60 days from date of opening, unless otherwise stated. After this time, any withdrawal of offer shall be made in writing, effective upon receipt by the agency issuing this RFP.

1.0 PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

Guilford County Schools (GCS) is seeking responsive, responsible, and qualified vendors to provide and implement an Integrated Student Transportation Routing System. The software should be able to accommodate Guilford County Schools transportation routing needs as described in the Scope of Work and interface seamlessly with the district's student management software programs and GPS programs for improved comparative analysis. The complete system shall include, but not be limited to all hardware and software with proven integration among the proposed solution, implementation services, system training, continuing support and maintenance and all services necessary to successfully implement the Transportation Routing System. This RFP describes, in detail, the partnership desired, to include products, services, warranties required and the vendors ability to provide them. The specifications detailed in this RFP are what GCS believes to be the most efficient solution for the district. GCS, however, is seeking the advice of potential vendors who will provide a Routing Software that is cost effective and efficient for the needs of GCS.

2.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

This RFP is comprised of the base bid document, any attachments, and any addenda released before contract award. All attachments and addenda released for this RFP in advance of any Contract award are incorporated herein by reference. Proposals shall be

submitted in accordance with the terms and conditions of this RFP and any addenda issued hereto. Vendor(s) will be expected to provide services for the 2021-2022 school year pursuant to these specifications and with the understanding that they have no guarantee of ridership or terms of service. An option clause is hereby included that, if agreeable with both parties, the contract may be extended for (4) four additional 12-month periods. If impeding circumstances exist, GCS may, at its discretion, extend the contact out one (1) additional year beyond the fourth renewal year, if agreeable to both parties.

TAXES

Guilford County Schools is **NOT** tax-exempt. Unless otherwise indicated, tax must be computed and added to your bid. Any itemized shipping charges are also subject to tax. When invoiced, tax should be invoiced as a separate line item.

MINORITY AND WOMEN OWNED BUSINESS ENTERPRISE (MWBE)

The Board of Education awards public contracts without regard to race, religion, color, creed, national origin, sex, age or handicapped condition as defined by North Carolina General Statutes, 168A-3. GCS Board of Education promotes full and equal access to business opportunities with Guilford County Schools. Minority businesses are encouraged to submit bids for this project. All vendors shall have a fair and reasonable opportunity to participate in GCS business opportunities.

INSURANCE

Certificate of Insurance

Each vendor shall furnish GCS a certificate of insurance showing that the required workmen's compensation and public liability insurance are carried by the Contractor. The certificate of insurance should show that it is issued to or at the request of the Guilford County Board of Education, Greensboro, North Carolina. All insurance carriers shall be licensed to do business in North Carolina or approved to issue insurance coverage by the Commission of Insurance of North Carolina.

The certificate of insurance shall include substantially the following provision: The insurance policies to which this certificate refers shall not be altered or canceled until after ten (10) days' written notice of such cancellation or alteration has been sent by certified mail to the Guilford County Board of Education, Greensboro, North Carolina.

Public Liability Insurance

The vendor shall maintain public liability insurance covering his liability for bodily injury and property damage which may arise from his operations, contractual obligations, products and completed operations, as well as operations performed by independent contractors, in not less than the following amounts:

1. A combined single limit (CSL) of $1,000,000 each occurrence, or
2. A $1,000,000 limit for Bodily Injury Liability, and $1,000,000 limit for Property Damage Liability.

An occurrence form of policy will be required, and the certificate of insurance submitted by the Contractor must be personally signed by a resident licensed agent of each of the companies listed on that form.

Worker's Compensation Insurance
The Contractor shall maintain during the life of his contract all such workmen's compensation insurance as is or may be required by the laws of North Carolina.

Terms and Conditions
It shall be the vendor's responsibility to read the instructions, terms and conditions, all relevant exhibits and attachments, and any other components made a part of this RFP and comply with all requirements and specifications herein. Vendors also are responsible for obtaining and complying with all Addenda and other changes that may be issued relating to this RFP. All bidders are hereby notified that they must have the proper license as required under the North Carolina laws. The award of a contract under this solicitation may be paid with federal funding. Funding is contingent upon compliance with all terms and conditions of funding award. All prospective contractors shall comply with all applicable federal laws, regulations, executive orders, FEMA requirements and the terms and conditions of the funding award. In addition, contractors providing submittals shall be responsible for complying with state law and local ordinances.

3.0 SPECIFIC INFORMATION

PROPOSAL QUESTIONS
Upon review of the RFP documents, vendors may have questions to clarify or interpret the RFP to submit the best proposal possible. To accommodate the proposal questions process, vendors shall submit any such questions by **1:00 pm, Monday, June 21, 2021.**

Instructions:
Written questions shall be emailed to Velicia Moore at **gaddyv@gcsnc.com** by the date and time specified above. Vendors will enter "RFP# 6331 Questions" as the subject for the email. Question submittals will include a reference to the applicable RFP section and be submitted in a format shown below:

Reference	Vendor Question
RFP Section, Page Number	Vendor question…?

Questions received prior to the submission deadline date, GCS's response, and any additional terms deemed necessary by GCS will be posted in the form of an addendum. No information, instruction or advice provided orally or informally by any GCS personnel, whether made in response to a question or otherwise regarding this RFP, shall be considered authoritative or binding. Vendors shall be entitled to rely ***only*** on written material contained in an addendum to this RFP.

PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL

MAILING INSTRUCTIONS
DELIVERED BY US POSTAL SERVICE OR ANY OTHER MEANS:
RFP No. 6331
Velicia Moore
Guilford County Schools
Purchasing Department
501 W. Washington Street
Greensboro, NC 27401

REFERENCES
Guilford County Schools reserves the right to require upon request a list of references from other school districts or similar service agencies for which the company has provided the services or goods solicited in this RFP. GCS may contact these users to determine quality level. Such information may be considered in the evaluation of the proposal.

4.0 AWARD AND BID EVALUATION

REVIEW AND AWARD

It is the intent of Guilford County Schools (GCS) to award this Request for Proposals to the responsible contractor(s) who best matches the needs of the Guilford County Schools Maintenance Department. GCS reserves the right to reject any or all proposals presented and to waive any informalities and irregularities. Award of this RFP may be in whole or in part as deemed to be in the best interest of GCS. All projects are awarded contingent upon funding. No proposal may be withdrawn after the scheduled closing time for the receipt of bids for a period of 60 days.

EVALUATION CRITERIA
GCS will review all potential contractor responses and reserves the right to contact contractor for RFP clarification as part of the evaluation process. GCS may, at its discretion, require one or more contractor to make presentations to an Evaluation Committee. ***PLEASE SEE XIII) B. Selection Committee & C. Qualifications Package Evaluation Criteria under 5.0 REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL DOCUMENT***

5.0 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS DOCUMENT

I. PURPOSE

Guilford County Schools (GCS) is seeking responsive, responsible, and qualified vendors to provide and implement an Integrated Student Transportation Routing System. The software should be able to accommodate Guilford County Schools transportation routing needs as described in the Scope of Work and interface seamlessly with the district's student management software programs and GPS programs for improved comparative analysis. The complete system shall include, but not be limited to all hardware and software with proven integration among the proposed solution, implementation services, system training, continuing support and maintenance and all services necessary to successfully implement the Transportation Routing System. This RFP describes, in detail, the partnership desired, to include products, services, warranties required and the vendors ability to provide them. The specifications detailed in this RFP are what GCS believes to be the most efficient solution for the district. GCS, however, is seeking the advice of potential vendors who will provide a Routing Software that is cost effective and efficient for the needs of GCS.

II. BACKGROUND

GCS is the third largest school district in the state of North Carolina and educates approximately 70,00 student Pre-K -12 in 128 school. GCS currently serves children in 128 schools. GCS currently employees approximately 10,000 fulltime and part-time employees. GCS transportation currently operates 520 buses while transporting approximately 34,00 students

The awarded vendor shall provide all professional services, hardware, communication services, software, installation, training, system documentation, labor, materials, supplies, tolls, specialized equipment, insurance permits, licenses, registration fees, and all services and things necessary to provide an integrated Transportation Routing System GCS in accordance with the requirements of this RFP.

III. STATEMENT OF NEEDS

The successful vendor is required to perform and fulfill all the undertakings, covenants, terms, conditions, and agreements of this RFP document and any negotiated contract(s). Specifications contained herein and in the successful response will become contractual obligations, if an award ensues. Failure of the vendor to fully perform these obligations may result in cancellation of the award and contract. GCS will look to the vendor and his/her identified personnel to coordinate and deliver the services described in this RFP. The services shall not be delegated to sub-vendors or assigned to any third party.

The awarded vendor shall be fully responsible for the successful delivery, implementation, continued support and all things and services necessary for the complete project.

Vendors shall include a detailed and separate cost analysis for each component to include but not be limited to hardware, software, delivery, installation, setup, implementation, training, licenses, and annual maintenance agreements.

IV. SCOPE OF WORK

GCS is seeking a comprehensive computer assisted software system for the purpose of school bus routing and scheduling. Software shall support efficient and effective route planning, optimization for student transportation services. Software should be compatible with NCDPI student information system (PowerSchool & Synovia) and allow daily automated data transfers between the student information system and routing software without manual coding or tuning.

V. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS:

1. System must be able to integrate with District's Active Directory (ADFS required)
2. All the student data will be retrieved from the district's student information system (NC PowerSchool). Riders received from some program offices may not be received in an electronic format. Therefore, the system must accept both electronic and manual update of student information.
3. The vendor should provide documentation describing the software procedures for loading student updates in the program from an electronic file.
4. This documentation should include documentation for loading an entire student database file or an incremental student load and identify the necessary format for loading the file. (i.e. ASCII fixed length, comma delimited, dbf, etc.).
5. Ability to import student data for all student enrollment as a schedulable, automated process.
6. Ability to upload transportation data back to the student information system (PowerSchool) instantly. Ability to upload transportation data back to the student information system (PowerSchool) instantly. API needs to be approved by NC DPI for PowerSchool integration.
7. Ability to develop custom reports that meet the criteria for NCDPI.
8. Batch address matching should provide the user with ability to select an alternative when address matching or errors are encountered.
9. The system should have the ability to identify or flag maintenance on system or routing service and provide a report based on the following:
    - Unmatched student addresses
    - Non-routed students

- Student at stop no bus
- Students with no stop and no bus
- Students with special service requirements
- Identify new students
- Identify student address changes
- Identify students who have been removed from busses
- Identify student who have been deleted from the system
- Non-routed students
- Buses with routes over the rated capacity
- Routes over a specified length of time

10. The system should allow manual assignment of students that do not address match to the map (e.g., out-of-district or map error) to bus stops. Ability to print route maps, boundaries, walking routes (point A to B) that can be used directly from the program.
11. Ability to print single or multi-page route maps to provide clarity for all sections of the run or route allow a seamless transfer of GIS Map Data.
12. The system should have the ability to archive data such as student, bus information and rider record information.
13. The system should allow the student and address points to be geo-coded based on x, y i.e. or specialized transportation such as McKinney Vento (SIT), Special Needs, After school, as well as address ranges on street segments.
14. Ability to attach an unlimited number of documents to student records within the database for special needs documentation, (pictures or safety reports to a bus stop) etc.
15. The system should calculate the shortest and safest distance based on actual student address to the school.
16. Ability to accept multiple unique addresses to be stored for a student - and for transportation assignments to use any of these addresses on any day of the week, am or pm.
17. The system should allow the user to override route segments, stop times based on the following factors:
    - Driving conditions
    - Weather inclement
    - Hazardous streets
    - Construction
18. Ability for runs to accommodate different bus stops, paths or times on a particular day of the week.
19. Ability for runs to automatically re-time after adding/removing bus stops or making other changes that may affect timing.
20. Ability to lock bus stop time and have system keep those times.

21. Ability to generate danger or unsafe zones i.e. sex offender locations.
22. Ability to store and manage generic zones to be used for segregation within the system.
    - Ability to use and update existing street maps. Maps will be provided by the district in GIS format
    - Ability to view aerial/satellite imagery within the system
    - Ability to store and view additional spatial data such as water features, railways, municipal parcels, landmarks or District specific spatial data within the system.
23. Ability to provide shape files that can be imported and exported. Sample data layers include:
    - Street centerlines
    - Railroads and USDOT crossings
    - Waterways
    - Tax parcels,
    - Address points

25. Ability to store multiple transportation databases for multiple purposes (ex. Live, previous, years, etc.)

24. Ability to calibrate driving speeds using GPS data including:
    - By street segment in both directions.
    - Entire map or specific area.
    - By day, week, time of day, and or specified range.
25. Ability to temporarily restrict vehicle access to a street segment for a specified date range including:
26. System should provide automated notifications when routing changes occur
    - Email parents or other stakeholder groups when transportation delays occur
    - Print bus passes with specific messaging and start dates.
27. Allow access with limited privileges
28. Ease of creating transfer stops that can accommodate the “Here Comes the Bus” app (https://herecomesthebus.com)
29. The system should provide security that would restrict the update of any routing data.
31. The system should provide batch address matching capabilities.

32. The system should provide graphic display of the number of students at each stop.

33. The system should be capable of automatically mass assigning students to bus stops based on the following:
    - The student’s transportation address,
    - Transportation eligibility,
    - The student's school and the school serviced by route,
    - Maximum District-defined walk to stop distances,
    - Safe walk paths defined in the map database and,
    - Existing stops.

34. The system should be able to identify student not automatically assigned in A.M. and/or P.M. bus stops graphically and on a hard copy report.

35. The system should allow multiple rider records on student record based on home school and alternative choice schools.

36. The system should have the ability to schedule stops which vary based on specific days (e.g. MWF pickup only).

37. The system should allow manual assignment of a group of students to a specific stop at user discretion.

38. The system should have functionality to compare import student addresses with the system addresses. The user shall have the ability to accept/not accept the new addresses for each student.

39. The system will provide validation checks of the data being imported for accuracy.

40. The system should be capable of dealing with adds, changes, and deletes as a subset of the entire student import, rather than require the entire student database to be imported each time.

VI. REPORTING CAPABILITIES

1. The system should provide the ability to report on basic student statistics, including total counts based on a set of parameters specified in field(s), including;
   - By School Number(s)
   - By Program code(s)
   - By Grade Level(s)
   - By Ethnicity
   - By disability/handicap
   - By defined boundary
2. The system should provide the ability to print student mailing labels from addresses stored in student record.

3. The system should provide a report of student bus riding time that exceeds the maximum ride time established by District policies.

4. The system should have the ability to track changes and provide a report that affects a student's transportation based on the following:
   - Route change that affect bus stops
   - Stop times
   - Student changes that require bus service to a stop.

5. The system should have the ability to provide a report of students that have been deleted from the system and bus service stops are affected.

6. The system should have the ability to provide a report of students that have changed request for bus service and bus service stops are affected and log all activity.

7. The system should have the ability to generate change notification letters for parents.

8. The system should have the ability to generate reports based on schools serviced by bus routes.

9. The system should have the ability to provide a report that can be electronically exchanged on a variety of platforms.

10. The system should have the ability to provide a report that can be printed on a variety of paper sizes based on selected scale preference and include the appropriate level of annotation and street detail.

11. The system should have the ability to provide a report that allows the use of colors and symbols to be modified at user discretion.

12. The system should have the ability to generate route sheets that contain all segments within a driver's daily route assignment.

13. The system should provide the option of printing route reports with turn by turn directions (Via's).

14. The system should provide the ability of printing routes reports that depict geographic turn by turn directions for drivers.

15. The system should provide the option of printing route sheets with student information at each stop that include other fields from student records at user discretion.

16. The system should provide the option of printing reports based on student's school of attendance and provide the option to select another field definition from within the student record at user discretion.

17. The system should be capable of producing a report of available stop locations to provide to schools and other interested parties with stop and student assigned information.

18. The system should have the ability to determine and print total miles traveled by all busses on a given day, sorted by reimbursable and non-reimbursable miles according to codes. The report can then be provided to the state as required.

19. The system should have the ability to schedule and route after school activities as is done with regular routes, while providing a reporting output specific to after school activities.
20. The system should have the ability to integrate district & state forms.

21. Once routing assignment is created all requester/approvers are notified electronically and routing system maintains record.

22. The system will provide a report of all import changes that occur for each student.

VII. SPECIAL NEEDS

1. It is preferred that one integrated module support routing for all transported student populations.

2. The system should provide the ability to track special vehicle modifications and equipment such as wheelchair lifts, seat belts, etc., associated with a specific school bus. The system should also track the number of equipment items available for those items that can only accommodate a fixed number of students (e.g., number of wheelchair stations).

3. "The system should provide the ability to track a student's need for special equipment, such as wheelchair lifts, seat belts or oxygen. The system should also track a student's need for a bus aide and track the assignment of that aide.

4. "When routing special education students, in addition to identifying a vehicle in the area servicing the correct school, the system must also be able to identify a vehicle equipped to meet a student's special needs and the availability of this equipment (i.e., a bus may have the appropriate equipment, but it may already be used by other students on the route).

5. If a bus with the required equipment is not identified to service the student's assigned school within defined policy, the system should be able to identify:
   - The closest bus with the proper equipment regardless of policy.
   - Alternative routes servicing schools with similar programs.

6. The system should provide the ability to identify and appropriately route students whose medical conditions require them to have a shorter maximum riding time. The system should maintain the student's maximum ride time with the student's record.

7. The system should have the ability to maintain a text field with additional information related to special education students (e.g. medical or behavioral: information) and print this information on the route sheet for driver instructions etc...

8. The system should be able to identify the addition of a special education student on a regular route by a note on the regular driver's route sheet and eligibility list.

9. The system should automatically add a standard loading and unloading time to the overall route's time for students with special needs. These special needs are identified by a series of codes related to equipment requirements in the student's record. The system should maintain a table of standard loading times by special need to determine the amount of time to be added to a route.

10. The system should allow the user to manually input different loading and unloading times based on an individual student's needs at a specific stop.

11. The system should track special loading and unloading instructions for students with special needs. The system should allow the information to be made available on a driver route sheet.

12. The system should identify bus assistants placed on buses in special situations.

13. The system should provide the ability to define different bus loading zones for regular and special education routes servicing the same school.

VIII. OPTIMIZATION CAPABILITIES:

1. The system should have a fleet scheduler to optimize bus runs and assess bus availability based on
   - Vehicle availability and utilization
   - Passenger capacity
   - Ability to analyze the effectiveness of existing run/route structures based on bell times
2. The system should have the ability to split bus runs assigned groups other criteria.
3. Ability to review current bell structure at schools and provide analysis for multiple scenarios including:
   - School(s) affected by bell change
   - Time for each change
   - Current and projected bus runs by school
   - Graphical chart
4. The system should have the ability to carry forward bus runs each year.
5. Customizable Interactive dashboard for operational statistics i.e. Key Performance Indicators (KPI)
6. Ability to analyze and view the effect on transportation bus runs based on changes, what if scenarios to
   - Walk Distance
   - User configurable
7. Provide route statistical information in both data grid and graphical to include:
   - Count of route (total fleet, regular buses, special needs, transportation zone, school, etc.)
   - Route with single and multiple runs for both morning and afternoon
   - Total route mileage and cost
   - Route mileage with students on board and when buses are empty
   - Total route time
   - Route time with students on board and when buses are empty
   - Total route cost
   - Route costs with students on board and when buses are empty

8. Total students enrolled as compared to transported students
    - By school type
    - By regular
    - By special needs
    - All schools

IX. FINANCIAL ANALYSIS:

1. The system should have the ability to provide reporting statistics based on routes scheduled within the system, including but not limited to the following:

- Cost per student
- Cost per student by program
- Average cost bus
- Cost per run
- Estimated cost for a specific route.
- Cost for a specific school.
- Cost for a specific program.
- Planned quarterly and annual costs.
- Average student ride time overall.
- Average student ride time by program.
- Estimated ride time for a specific student.
- Average daily number of students transported overall.
- Average daily number of students transported by program,
- Average ridership by grade level.
- Percent of eligible students not assigned to a route.

2. Ability to produce reports that provide key KPIs to measure the efficiency of the routing solution.
    - Ability to incorporate operational rates into the system.
    - Ability to determine accurate cost by route based on vehicle usage and time.
    - Ability to generate summaries of cost by yard or across the fleet.
    - Ability to generate cost per vehicle broken down by overall aggregates, by school, by yard, etc.
    - Cost per student on individual runs to and from school - daily basis.

X. GPS INTEGRATION:

1. Routing software must fully integrate (two way) with Synovia/CalAmp
2. Ability to automatically provide transportation data seamlessly to the Synovia/CalAmp GPS solution.
3. Real time route progress utilizing existing Synovia/CalAmp GPS technology.
4. View and analyze planned vs. actual route utilizing Synovia/CalAmp GPS technology.
5. Routing software should support receiving various GPS data utilizing Synovia/CalAmp GPS technology.
6. Ability to view and analyze planned vs. actual stop time utilizing GPS technology.
7. Ability to use existing GPS data to improve the quality of the planning base map.
8. Accept student ridership data in routing software by student including:
    - Date and time stamp
    - Location of each student scan
    - Latitude Longitude coordinates for each scan
    - Plot individual scans on map
    - Apply student scans to make sound routing assignments
    - Boarding and exiting bus
9. Analysis of planned vs. actual displayed in core routing solution by date and time including:
    - Statistical analysis of planned vs. actual bus run to show differences in:
        a. Mileage
        b. Time
        c. Student ridership
10. Ability to edit planned bus run to match actual GPS path
11. Compare planned vs. actual bus stop times on a bus run

XI. INTERNAL PORTAL:

1. Software must include a web-based facility for the public to access transportation eligibility, route and school attendance information based on District's transportation policies. (Available on / off network)
2. Software must include a secure portal for school staff to access transportation information specific to their school only. (Available on / off network)
3. Software must include a secure portal for parents to determine transportation information for their student(s). (Available on / off network)
4. Ability for transportation administrators to post notifications and alert constituents of service disruptions. (Available on / off network)

XII. REDISTRICTING:

1. Ability to find/sort students by grade, program, home school, attended school, distance and address including students that are not presently being transported by bus.
2. Ability to analyze students who attend schools outside their “home” attendance boundary.
3. Ability to generate school boundaries based on school capacity, student population or other criteria.
4. Ability to analyze the effects of the closure of a school and suggest relocation of the current school population
5. Ability to create/maintain temporary attendance boundaries for “what if” scenario planning.
6. Ability to create, display and print boundary coverage.

XIII. ON-SITE IMPLEMENTATION AND TRAINING

The vendor shall provide a high level comprehensive on-site project timeline and training in accordance to districts plan that outlines how you see GCS implementation of your solution. Include major milestones and key deliverables and dates that will be generated during the project staff on all aspects of the proposed software by the specified time outlined. The training plan should be sufficiently detailed and provide the following:

1. Include timelines and training schedules
2. Outline objective and outcomes
   - Include a summary of professional development training points
   - Give expectations of user competency upon completion of training in phases
3. Provide unlimited refresher training and new employee/user orientation
4. Provide a dedicated team/development services for initial setup and configuration while staff are being trained.
5. Describe the type of resources that would be assigned to this project.
6. Describe the type of GCS resources required to be assigned to the implementation project.
7. Provide a dedicated single point of contact (project manager) during implementation. Any changes must be approved in advance with GCS.
8. Describe how the integration to GCS systems will work. How will the data be migrated?
9. Describe your largest implementation (concurrent users, database size etc.,)
10. Outline your load testing process. Please share your load/performance testing results for a similar sized client.

11. The system should store data in industry standard structures that are available to third party programs.
12. The system must support daily downloads from the current student management information system. The vendor is required to process and verify the conversion of the first download, and to provide the district with the means to perform future imports without vendor intervention. The vendor must indicate any cost associated with the functionality. API needs to be approved by NC DPI for PowerSchool integration
13. Provide guidance on how software will support file daily download automation, whereby a file is created out of the routing system which can then be automatically set up to upload each night into the student management system without user intervention. The file would consist of key data such as student name, stop description, stop time and bus number.
14. The system should securely and safely store and transmit data according to industry standards and best practices.

A. Period of Service:

Vendor(s) will be expected to provide services for the 2021-2022 school year pursuant to these specifications and with the understanding that they have no guarantee of ridership or terms of service. An option clause is hereby included that, if agreeable with both parties, the contract may be extended for four additional 12-month periods. If impeding circumstances exist, GCS may, at its discretion, extend the contact out one (1) additional year beyond the fourth renewal year, if agreeable to both parties.

B. Selection Committee:

A selection committee will evaluate the information submitted. Interviews with short-listed carriers are anticipated but may not be held at the option of the Selection Committee. Please do not contact any GCS staff member other than the designated contact person (Shayla Parker by email only) regarding the project contemplated under this RFP while the RFP is open, and a selection has not been finalized. Any attempt to do so may result in disqualification of the carrier's submittal for consideration.

C. Qualifications Package Evaluation Criteria

Qualifications Packages will be evaluated on the ability to meet requirements of this Request for Proposals (RFP). Qualified proposals will be evaluated according to RFP pricing (25%), experience and professional reputation (10%), customer support and responsiveness (20%), functional and technical requirements (25%), system integration/customization capabilities (10%) and system reliability and effectiveness (10%).

D. Questions:

Please direct all questions and requests for information to Velicia Moore at gaddyv@gcsnc.com, no later than 1:00pm on Monday, June 21, 2021.

F. Submittal Requirements:

If your carrier would like to be considered for providing transportation services for GCS, please submit (2) two hard copies and (1) one digital copy of your Qualifications Package to:

Velicia Moore
Purchasing
Guilford County Schools
501 W Washington Street
Greensboro, NC 27401

Each carrier is solely responsible for the timely delivery of its Qualifications Package. *All Qualifications Packages must be received by* ***2:00 PM on Wednesday, June 30, 2021, at 501 W. Washington Street, Greensboro, NC.*** No Qualifications Package will be accepted after this deadline. Carriers accept all risks of late delivery of qualification packages regardless of fault.

The Qualifications Package should consist of a Letter of Interest and the two tabbed sections described below. Due to demands on the time of the Selection Committee members, please limit your submittal to 25 pages, 8.5" x 11" format (cover letters of interest, table of contents, tabs or dividers are not included in the count). Longer submissions may be removed from consideration. The Letter of Interest must identify a contact person for questions during the bidding process and provide contact information including telephone number, fax, email and postal address.

J. Presentation/Demonstration:

If in GCS's opinion, vendor presentations or demonstrations of the Vendor s proposed system's features and capabilities are warranted, GCS will notify the appropriate vendors. Such presentation or demonstration will be at an GCS site at a date and time mutually agreed to between GCS and Vendor and will be at the Vendors expense.

K. Cost of Responding:

This solicitation does not commit GCS to pay any costs incurred by the Vendor or any other party in the preparation and/or submission of proposals or in making necessary studies or designs for the preparation thereof, nor is GCS obligated to procure or contract for such services.

ATTACHMENT I: SUPPLEMENTAL VENDOR INFORMATION

HISTORICALLY UNDERUTILIZED BUSINESSES

Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUBs) consist of minority, women and disabled business firms that are at least fifty-one percent owned and operated by an individual(s) of the categories. Also included in this category are disabled business enterprises and non-profit work centers for the blind and severely disabled.

Pursuant to G.S. 143B-1361(a), 143-48 and 143-128.4, THE STATE invites and encourages participation in this procurement process by businesses owned by minorities, women, disabled, disabled business enterprises and nonprofit work centers for the blind and severely disabled. This includes utilizing subcontractors to perform the required functions in this RFP. Any questions concerning NC HUB certification, contact **the North Carolina Office of Historically Underutilized Businesses** at (919) 807-2330. The Vendor shall respond to question #1 and #2 below.

a) Is Vendor a Historically Underutilized Business? ☐ Yes ☐ No

b) Is Vendor Certified with North Carolina as a Historically Underutilized Business? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If so, state HUB classification: _____

INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS

1. **READ, REVIEW AND COMPLY:** It shall be the bidder's responsibility to read this entire document, review all enclosures and attachments, and comply with all requirements specified herein.

2. **NOTICE TO BIDDERS:** All bids are subject to the provisions of the Instructions to Bidders, special terms and conditions specific to this Invitation for Bids, the specifications, and the North Carolina General Contract Terms and Conditions.
   The Guilford County Schools (GCS) objects to and will not evaluate or consider any additional terms and conditions submitted with a bidder response. This applies to any language appearing in or attached to the document as part of the bidder's response. DO NOT ATTACH ANY ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS. By execution and delivery of this document, the bidder agrees that any additional terms and conditions, whether submitted purposely or inadvertently, shall have no force or effect.

3. **DEFINITIONS:**
   - **BIDDER:** Company, firm, corporation, partnership, individual, etc., submitting a response to an Invitation for Bids.
   - **TERM CONTRACT:** A contract generally intended to cover all normal requirements for a commodity for a specified period of time based on estimated quantities only.
   - **STATEWIDE TERM CONTRACT:** A term Contract for all agencies, unless exempted by statute, rule, or special term and condition specific to this bid.
   - **AGENCY SPECIFIC TERM CONTRACT**: A Term Contract for a specific agency.
   - **OPEN MARKET CONTRACT:** A contract for the purchase of a commodity not covered by a term contract.

4. **EXECUTION:** Failure to sign under EXECUTION section will render bid invalid.

5. **ORDER OF PRECEDENCE:** In cases of conflict between specific provisions in this bid, the order of precedence shall be (1) special terms and conditions specific to this bid, (2) specifications, (3) North Carolina General Contract Terms and Conditions, and (4) Instructions to Bidders.

6. **TIME FOR CONSIDERATION:** Unless otherwise indicated on the first page of this document, bidder's offer shall be valid for 45 days from the date of bid opening. Preference may be given to bids allowing not less than 45 days for consideration and acceptance.

7. **PROMPT PAYMENT DISCOUNTS:** Bidders are urged to compute all discounts into the price offered. If a prompt payment discount is offered, it will not be considered in the award of the contract except as a factor to aid in resolving cases of identical prices.

8. **SPECIFICATIONS:** Any deviation from specifications indicated herein must be clearly pointed out; otherwise, it will be considered that items offered are in strict compliance with these specifications, and bidder will be held responsible therefore. Deviations shall be explained in detail. **The bidder shall not construe this paragraph as inviting deviation or implying that any deviation will be acceptable.**

9. **INFORMATION AND DESCRIPTIVE LITERATURE:** Bidder is to furnish all information requested and in the spaces provided in this document. Further, if required elsewhere in this bid, each bidder must submit with their bid sketches, descriptive literature and/or complete specifications covering the products offered. Reference to literature submitted with a previous bid will not satisfy this provision. Bids which do not comply with these requirements will be subject to rejection.

10. **RECYCLING AND SOURCE REDUCTION:** It is the policy of this State to encourage and promote the purchase of products with recycled content to the extent economically practicable, and to purchase items which are reusable, refillable, repairable, more durable, and less toxic to the extent that the purchase or use is practicable and cost-effective.
    We also encourage and promote using minimal packaging and the use of recycled/recyclable products in the packaging of commodities purchased. However, no sacrifice in quality of packaging will be acceptable. The company remains responsible for providing packaging that will protect the commodity and contain it for its intended use.
    Companies are strongly urged to bring to the attention of the purchasers in the Division of Purchase and Contract those products or packaging they offer which have recycled content and that are recyclable.

11. **CLARIFICATIONS/INTERPRETATIONS:** Any and all questions regarding this document must be addressed to the purchaser named on the cover sheet of this document. Do not contact the user directly. Any and all revisions to this document shall be made only by written addendum from the Division of Purchase and Contract. The bidder is cautioned that the requirements of this bid can be altered only by written addendum and that verbal communications from whatever source are of no effect.

12. **ACCEPTANCE AND REJECTION:** GCS reserves the right to reject any and all bids, to waive any informality in bids and, unless otherwise specified by the bidder, to accept any item in the bid. If either a unit price or extended price is obviously in error and the other is obviously correct, the incorrect price will be disregarded.

13. **REFERENCES:** GCS reserves the right to require a list of users of the exact item offered. GCS may contact these users to determine acceptability of the bid. Such information may be considered in the evaluation of the bid.

14. **TAXES:**
    - **FEDERAL:** All agencies participating in this contract are exempt from Federal Taxes, such as excise and transportation. Exemption forms submitted by the contractor will be executed and returned by the using agency.
    - **OTHER:** Prices offered are not to include any personal property taxes, nor any sales or use tax (or fees) unless required by the North Carolina Department of Revenue.
    - Any applicable taxes shall be invoiced as a separate item.

15. **AWARD OF CONTRACT:** As directed by statute, qualified bids will be evaluated and acceptance may be made of the lowest and best bid most advantageous to GCS as determined upon consideration of such factors as: prices offered; the quality of the articles offered; the general reputation and performance capabilities of the bidders; the substantial conformity with the specifications and other conditions set forth in the bid; the suitability of the articles for the intended use; the related services needed; the date or dates of delivery and performance; and such other factors deemed by GCS to be pertinent or peculiar to the purchase in question. Unless otherwise specified by GCS or the bidder, GCS reserves the right to accept any item or group of items on a multi-item bid. In addition, on TERM CONTRACTS, GCS reserves the right to make partial, progressive or multiple awards: where it is advantageous to award separately by items; or where more than one supplier is needed to provide the contemplated requirements as to quantity, quality, delivery, service, geographical areas; other factors deemed by GCS to be pertinent or peculiar to the purchase in question.

    All contracts are awarded contingent upon the availability of funds.

16. **HISTORICALLY UNDERUTILIZED BUSINESSES:** Pursuant to General Statute 143-48 and Executive Order #150, GCS invites and encourages participation in this procurement process by businesses owned by minorities, women, disabled, disabled business enterprises and non-profit work centers for the blind and severely disabled.

17. **CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION:** As provided by statute and rule, the GCS will consider keeping trade secrets which the bidder does not wish disclosed confidential. Each page shall be identified in boldface at the top and bottom as "CONFIDENTIAL" by the bidder. Cost information shall not be deemed confidential. In spite of what is labeled as a trade secret, the determination whether it is or not will be determined by North Carolina law.

18. **SAMPLES:** Sample of items, when required, must be furnished as stipulated herein, free of expense, and if not destroyed will, upon request be returned at the bidder's expense. Request for the return of samples must be made within 10 days following date of bid opening. Otherwise the samples will become GCS property. Each individual sample must be labeled with the bidder's name, bid number, and item number. A sample on which an award is made, will be retained until the contract is completed, and then returned, if requested, as specified above.

19. **PROTEST PROCEDURES:** When an offeror wants to protest a contract awarded pursuant to this solicitation, that is over $10,000, they must submit a written request to the GCS Purchasing Officer at the address given in the solicitation document entitled "Mailing Instructions". This request must be received in the Purchasing Department within (5) consecutive business days of the e-mail notification to the offeror of GCS' intent to maintain the original award. The offeror must submit a written protest letter to the GCS Purchasing Officer. This letter must contain specific reasons and any supporting documentation for the protest.

20. **MISCELLANEOUS:** Masculine pronouns shall be read to include feminine pronouns, and the singular of any word or phrase shall be read to include the plural and vice versa.

21. **DEFAULT AND PERFORMANCE BOND**: In case of default by the contractor, Guilford County Schools (GCS) may procure the articles or services from other sources and hold the contractor responsible for any excess cost occasioned thereby. GCS reserves the right to require performance bond or other acceptable alternative guarantees from successful bidder without expense to GCS.

22. **SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS REGARDING CRIMINAL BACKGROUND**

    A. Criminal Background Investigations of individuals working on school property (sites occupied with students and sites not occupied with students).

B. At a minimum, the contractor shall obtain a complete North Carolina statewide criminal background investigation for all employees and subcontractors who will work on this project, covering a period for the last seven (7) years. If the contractor or subcontractor is from out of state, the criminal background investigation shall be broadened to include their home state, as well as the state of North Carolina as outlined above. The company providing such information must be recognized by local law enforcement agency as qualified to do so. All costs associated with these criminal background checks is the responsibility of the contractor.

Each prime contractor will be responsible for all their employees and all of their subcontractors working under them.

On sites that are occupied with students and staff, a daily sign-in sheet will be presented by each prime contractor to the principal and SRO – Student Resource Officer by 9:00 a.m. each morning. If there is no SRO – provide to the Principal. This list will contain the name of each person on site and the company they work for.

C. Any individual with the following criminal convictions or pending charges will NOT be permitted on any school project or property.

1. Child Molestation or Abuse or indecent liberties with a child;
2. Rape;
3. Any Sexually Oriented Crime;
4. Drugs: Felony use, possession or distribution;
5. Murder, manslaughter or other death related charge; or
6. Assault with a deadly weapon or assault with intent to kill.

D. Any individual with a prior conviction or pending charges contained in the aforementioned list, shall be banned (not allowed) from any school project or property.

E. Each person on site must wear a plastic laminated identification badge that identifies the name of the company and the person's name. These badges are to be computer produced at a font large enough to be clearly visible. All costs associated with these criminal background checks is the responsibility of the contractor. The ID badge template will be made available to the successful prime contractors at the Pre-Construction Meeting.

F. Guilford County Schools, may, at any time, request verification of criminal background investigation for any employee or subcontractor on school property.

GENERAL CONTRACT TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. **DEFAULT AND PERFORMANCE BOND:** In case of default by the contractor, Guilford County Schools (GCS) may procure the articles or services from other sources and hold the contractor responsible for any excess cost occasioned thereby. GCS reserves the right to require performance bond or other acceptable alternative guarantees from successful bidder without expense to GCS.

2. **GOVERNMENTAL RESTRICTIONS:** In the event any Governmental restrictions are imposed which necessitate alteration of the material, quality, workmanship or performance of the items offered prior to their delivery, it shall be the responsibility of the contractor to notify, in writing, the issuing purchasing office at once, indicating the specific regulation which required such alterations. GCS reserves the right to accept any such alterations, including any price adjustments occasioned thereby, or to cancel the contract.

3. **AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS:** Any and all payments to the contractor are dependent upon and subject to the availability of funds to the agency for the purpose set forth in this agreement. No goods or services should be shipped or provided prior to issuance of a Purchase Order to the vendor/contractor by Guilford County Schools.

4. **TAXES:** Any applicable taxes shall be invoiced as a separate item.

   G.S. 143-59.1 bars the Secretary of Administration from entering into contracts with vendors if the vendor or its affiliates meet one of the conditions of G. S. 105-164.8(b) and refuse to collect use tax on sales of tangible personal property to purchasers in North Carolina. Conditions under G. S. 105-164.8(b) include: (1) Maintenance of a retail establishment or office, (2) Presence of representatives in the State that solicit sales or transact business on behalf of the vendor and (3) Systematic exploitation of the market by media-assisted, media-facilitated, or media-solicited means. By execution of the bid document the vendor certifies that it and all of its affiliates, (if it has affiliates), collect(s) the appropriate taxes.

5. **SITUS:** The place of this contract, its situs and forum, shall be North Carolina, where all matters, whether sounding in contract or tort, relating to its validity, construction, interpretation and enforcement shall be determined.

6. **GOVERNING LAWS:** This contract is made under and shall be governed and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of North Carolina.

7. **INSPECTION AT CONTRACTOR'S SITE:** GCS reserves the right to inspect, at a reasonable time, the equipment/item, plant or other facilities of a prospective contractor prior to contract award, and during the contract term as necessary for GCS determination that such equipment/item, plant or other facilities conform with the specifications/requirements and are adequate and suitable for the proper and effective performance of the contract.

8. **PAYMENT TERMS:** Payment terms are Net 30 days after receipt of correct invoice or acceptance of goods. The using agency is responsible for all payments to the contractor under the contract. Payment by some agencies may be made by procurement card and it shall be accepted by the contractor for payment if the contractor accepts that card (Visa, Mastercard, etc.) from other customers. If payment is made by procurement card, then payment may be processed immediately by the contractor.

9. **AFFIRMATIVE ACTION:** The contractor will take affirmative action in complying with all Federal and State requirements concerning fair employment and employment of people with disabilities and concerning the treatment of all employees without regard to discrimination by reason of race, color, religion, sex, national origin or disability.

10. **CONDITION AND PACKAGING:** Unless otherwise provided by special terms and conditions or specifications, it is understood and agreed that any item offered or shipped has not been sold or used for any purpose and shall be in first class condition. All containers/packaging shall be suitable for handling, storage or shipment.

11. **STANDARDS:** All manufactured items and/or fabricated assemblies subject to operation under pressure, operation by connection to an electric source, or operation involving a connection to a manufactured, natural, or LP gas source shall be constructed and approved in a manner acceptable to the appropriate state inspector which customarily requires the label or re-examination listing or identification marking of the appropriate safety standard organization; such as the American Society of Mechanical Engineers for pressure vessels; the Underwriters Laboratories and /or National Electrical Manufacturers' Association for electrically operated assemblies; or the American Gas Association for gas operated assemblies, where such approvals of listings have been established for the type of device offered and furnished. Further, all items furnished shall meet all requirements of the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA), and state and federal requirements relating to clean air and water pollution.

12. **PATENT:** The contractor shall hold and save GCS, its officers, agents and employees, harmless from liability of any kind, including costs and expenses, on account of any copyrighted material, patented or unpatented invention, articles, device or appliance manufactured or used in the performance of this contract, including use by the government.

13. **ADVERTISING:** Contractor agrees not to use the existence of this contract or the name of the State of North Carolina as part of any commercial advertising.

14. **ACCESS TO PERSONS AND RECORDS:** The State Auditor and the using agency's internal auditors shall have access to persons and records as a result of all contracts or grants entered into by State agencies or political subdivisions in accordance with General Statute 147-64.7 and Session Law 2010-194, Section 21 (i.e., the State Auditors and internal auditors may audit the records of the contractor during the term of the contract to verify accounts and data affecting fees or performance).

15. **ASSIGNMENT:** No assignment of the contractor's obligations nor the contractor's right to receive payment hereunder shall be permitted. However, upon written request approved by the issuing purchasing authority and solely as a convenience to the contractor, may:
    a. Forward the contractor's payment check directly to any person or entity designated by the contractor, and
    b. Include any person or entity designated by contractor as a joint payee on the contractor's payment check.
    In no event shall such approval and action obligate the State to anyone other than the contractor and the contractor shall remain responsible for fulfillment of all contract obligations.

16. **INSURANCE COVERAGE:** - During the term of the contract, the contractor at its sole cost and expense shall provide commercial insurance of such type and with such terms and limits as may be reasonably associated with the contract. As a minimum, the contractor shall provide and maintain the following coverage and limits:
    a. **Worker's Compensation** - The contractor shall provide and maintain Worker's Compensation Insurance, as required by the laws of North Carolina, as well as employer's liability coverage with minimum limits of $150,000.00, covering all of contractor's employees who are engaged in any work under the contract. If any work is sublet, the contractor shall require the subcontractor to provide the same coverage for any of his employees engaged in any work under the contract.
    b. **Commercial General Liability** - General Liability Coverage on a Comprehensive Broad Form on an occurrence basis in the minimum amount of $1,000,000.00 Combined Single Limit. (Defense cost shall be in excess of the limit of liability.)
    c. **Automobile** - Automobile Liability Insurance, to include liability coverage, covering all owned, hired and non-owned vehicles, used in connection with the contract. The minimum combined single limit shall be $150,000.00 bodily injury and property damage; $150,000.00 uninsured/under insured motorist; and $1,000.00 medical payment.
    REQUIREMENTS: Providing and maintaining adequate insurance coverage is a material obligation of the contractor and is of the essence of this contract. All such insurance shall meet all laws of the State of North Carolina. Such insurance coverage shall be obtained from companies that are authorized to provide such coverage and that are authorized by the Commissioner of Insurance to do business in North Carolina. The contractor shall at all times comply with the terms of such insurance policies, and all requirements of the insurer under any such insurance policies, except as they may conflict with existing North Carolina laws or this contract. The limits of coverage under each insurance policy maintained by the contractor shall not be interpreted as limiting the contractor's liability and obligations under the contract.

17. **GENERAL INDEMNITY:** The contractor shall hold and save the State, its officers, agents, and employees, harmless from liability of any kind, including all claims and losses, with the exception of consequential damages, accruing or resulting to any other person, firm, or corporation furnishing or supplying work, services, materials, or supplies in connection with the performance of this contract, and from any and all claims and losses accruing or resulting to any person, firm, or corporation that may be injured or damaged by the contractor in the performance of this contract and that are attributable to the negligence or intentionally tortuous acts of the contractor provided that the contractor is notified in writing within 30 days that the State has knowledge of such claims. The contractor represents and warrants that it shall make no claim of any kind or nature against the State's agents who are involved in the delivery or processing of contractor goods to the State. The representation and warranty in the preceding sentence shall survive the termination or expiration of this contract.

18. **THE SUCCESSFUL BIDDER(S) SHALL PAY A TRANSACTION FEE OF 1.75% (.0175) ON THE TOTAL DOLLAR AMOUNT (EXCLUDING SALES TAXES) OF EACH PURCHASE ORDER ISSUED THROUGH THE STATEWIDE E-PROCUREMENT SERVICE** This applies to all e-procurement purchase orders, regardless of the quantity or dollar amount of the purchase order. This transaction fee shall neither be charged to nor paid by GCS. The transaction fee shall not be stated or included as a separate item in the proposed contract or invoice. There are no additional fees or charges to the contractor for the services rendered by GCS under this contract.

19. **CANCELLATION (TERM CONTRACTS ONLY):** All contract obligations shall prevail for at least 180 days after the effective date of the contract. After that period, in addition to the provisions of the paragraph entitled Price Adjustments, for the protection of both parties, this contract may be canceled in whole or in part by either party by giving 30 days prior notice in writing to the other party. Such notice of cancellation, as required herein, shall be transmitted via U.S. MAIL, Certified, Return Receipt Requested. The 30 days' notice for cancellation shall begin on the day the return receipt is signed and dated.

20. **QUANTITIES (TERM CONTRACTS ONLY):** The award of a term contract neither implies nor guarantees any minimum or maximum purchases thereunder.

21. **PRICE ADJUSTMENTS (TERM CONTRACTS ONLY):** Any price changes, downward or upward, which might be permitted during the contract period must be general, either by reason of market change or on the part of the contractor to other customers.
    a. **Notification:** Must be given to GCS, in writing, concerning any proposed price adjustments. Such notification shall be accompanied by copy of manufacturer's official notice or other acceptable evidence that the change is general in nature.
    b. **Decreases:** GCS shall receive full proportionate benefit immediately at any time during the contract period.
    c. **Increases:** All prices shall be firm against any increase for 180 days from the effective date of the contract. After this period, a request for increase may be submitted with GCS reserving the right to accept or reject the increase, or cancel the contract. Such action by GCS shall occur not later than 15 days after the receipt by GCS of a properly documented request for price increase. Any increases accepted shall become effective not later than 30 days after the expiration of the original 15 days reserved to evaluate the request for increase.
    d. **Invoices:** It is understood and agreed that orders will be shipped at the established contract prices in effect on dates orders are placed. Invoicing at variance with this provision will subject the contract to cancellation. Applicable North Carolina sales tax shall be invoiced as a separate item.