Maine Community College System
323 State Street
Augusta, ME 04330

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Student Information System (SIS)

RFI Coordinator	*All communication regarding this RFI <u>must</u> be made through the RFI Coordinator identified below.* **<u>Name:</u>** Chris Glancy **Title:** RFI Coordinator **<u>Contact Information:</u>** SISproject@mccs.me.edu
Informational Meeting	**<u>Date:</u>** 09/24/2021 **<u>Time:</u>** 11:00 AM EST **<u>Location:</u>** Virtual Meeting
Submitted Questions Due	*All questions <u>must</u> be submitted to the RFI Coordinator identified above by:* **<u>Date:</u>** 09/30/2021, no later than noon, EST. Responses to the questions will be posted by 10/01/2021 at 12:00 pm.
Response Submission	**<u>Submission Deadline:</u>** 10/13/2021 no later than 5:00 pm, local time **<u>Submit to:</u>** SISproject@mccs.me.edu

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PUBLIC NOTICE

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Maine Community College System

Student Information System

The Maine Community College System is seeking information under this Request for Information (RFI) as is a statewide request to understand better the Student Information System market and suitable vendors occupying the space.

A copy of the RFI, as well as the Question & Answer Summary and all other related documents to this RFI, can be obtained at the following website: URL: https://www.mccs.me.edu/request-for-proposals/

An Informational Meeting will be held on 09/24/2021 **Time:** 11:00 am EST
Location: Virtual Meeting

Responses must be submitted to Chris Glancy at SISproject@mccs.me.edu by 10/13/2021 no later than 5:00 pm, local time

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RFI DEFINITIONS/ACRONYMS

The following terms and acronyms shall have the meaning indicated below as referenced in this Request for Information:

Term/Acronym	Definition
RFI	Request for Information
RFP	Request for Proposal
State	State of Maine
MCCS	Maine Community College System
FOAA	Maine Freedom of Access Act
Respondent	Any individual or organization submitting a response to this RFI.
Workforce Development	College to Employer contracted training initiative services offered by MCCS to State employers (special programs)
SIS	Student Information System
SaaS	Software as a Service
Configuration	To use tools in the application to meet specific requirements without the use of code.
Customization	Write new code (programs, class files, scripts) in the software that meets specific requirements.

Maine Community College System

Student Information System (SIS)

PART I   INTRODUCTION

1. Purpose and Background

This Request for Information (RFI) is an information gathering and market research tool, not a formal solicitation of a specific requirement (such as in a "Request for Proposals" document). The Maine Community College System (MCCS) is seeking information regarding a Student Information System (SIS) from interested parties as defined in this RFI document. This is an opportunity for interested parties to help the MCCS better understand a marketplace and specific subject matter.

MCCS is made up of the seven accredited community colleges across the State of Maine. Over 16,000 students were enrolled in a credit course in Fall 2020, with two-thirds of the students enrolled in career and occupational programs. In addition to the degree programs, the colleges also provide an extensive array of Continuing Education and Workforce Development training to individuals across the State. The mission of MCCS is to provide associate degree, diploma, and certificate programs directed at the educational, career, and technical needs of the State's citizens and the workforce needs of the State's employers. MCCS's primary goals are to create an educated, skilled and adaptable labor force that is responsive to the changing needs of the economy of the State and promote local, regional and statewide economic development.

This initiative supports the MCCS desire to modernize and enhance its SIS and its capabilities to service the academic community and its students. MCCS will evaluate, plan implement, and support a modernized and enhanced SIS across all seven MCCS colleges in support of the three strategic priorities:

- Get them in,
- Get them through,
- Keep them connected.

2. Current Conditions

Historically, the Colleges of the MCCS system have managed their individual IT systems, including making individual procurement decisions and managing their own IT enterprise. The MCCS system currently utilizes a SIS with seven different instances, one at each college, deployed over ten years ago. Each College has managed its own instance, with sometimes common and sometimes disparate customizations and integrations. An additional instance (for a total of eight) is deployed at the system level for accounting and

data collection purposes. The instances are not utilizing a shared infrastructure and are deployed individually. The current SIS has limited custom integrations to third-party platforms, including the recently deployed system-wide Learning Management System (LMS) Brightspace, PowerFAIDS, the One Card or Student Access system for access, purchasing on-campus or meal programs, and bookstore vendor system Barnes and Noble.

The current systems' integrations are limited and troublesome due to the decentralized architecture, uneven versioning, and disparate databases.

3. **Challenge Statement**

The purpose of this RFI is to elicit the advice and best analysis of knowledgeable persons in the vendor community to enable the Colleges to understand solutions managing student, faculty, workforce, administration, college system success, and student engagement. Responses to this RFI should include valuable information in drafting detailed specifications related to acquiring or upgrading an SIS with a strong emphasis on enabling student success.

Respondents are invited to provide information regarding the capabilities of their SIS. For this RFI, "student success, faculty/administrative success and system success" can be defined by an increase in application to enroll yield, increase in fall-to-fall retention, increase in degree completion, reduction in a manual process, integration to best-of-breed third-party platforms, seamless integration of Workforce Development and non-degree programs, and reduction in time to degree completion.

The ideal SIS will have the following attributes:
- Be a standard SaaS-based system for the MCCS and its Colleges.
- Provide flexibility for each College to maintain its unique brand and support its individual work-flow, data analytics, and offering needs.
- Address both degree-seeking and non-degree students.
- Be simple to use, govern, and maintain.
- Provide simple, standardized APIs for integrations to third-party products.

4. **General Provisions**

4 a.   All contact with the MCCS regarding this RFI <u>must</u> be made through the aforementioned RFI Coordinator. No other person/ MCCS employee is empowered to make binding statements regarding this RFI.

4 b.   This is a non-binding Request for Information. Therefore, no award shall be made as a result of the RFI process.

4 c.   Issuance of this RFI does not commit the MCCS to pay any expenses incurred by a Respondent in the preparation of their response to this RFI. This includes attendance at personal interviews or other meetings and software or system demonstrations, where applicable.

4 d.   Issuance of this RFI in no way constitutes a commitment by the MCCS to issue a RFP.

4 e.   All responses should adhere to the instructions and format requests outlined in this RFI and all written supplements and amendments, such as the Summary of Questions and Answers, issued by the MCCS.

4 f. All submissions in response to this RFI will be considered public records available for public inspection pursuant to the State of Maine Freedom of Access Act (FOAA) (1 MRS §§ 401 et seq.): State of Maine Freedom of Access Act.

4 g. All applicable laws, whether contained herein, shall be included in this reference. It shall be the Respondent's responsibility to determine the applicability and requirements of any such laws and to abide by them.

PART II   INFORMATION SOUGHT

MCCS seeks information regarding SIS applications and welcomes responses to this RFI, including creative suggestions and feedback to enhance and expedite all future processes while providing efficient, reliable, and high-quality outcomes. Respondents are not required to submit responses pertaining to every question, but the MCCS encourages interested parties to respond to any or all relevant aspects of the RFI.

MCCS seeks detailed yet succinct responses that demonstrate the Respondent's experience and/or familiarity with the subject matter. **As this is not a competitive RFP process, Respondents must not provide any specific cost or customized pricing documentation in their response.**

Questions below are to be answered on the base (unmodified) system functionality. Where the System requires a third-party product for the capability, identify the need clearly:

1) <u>Identity</u>. Please identify yourself and any organization you represent in this RFI.
   - 1.a   Name of Respondent
   - 1.b   Organization and affiliation
   - 1.c   Address (organizational, if responding on behalf of an entity)
   - 1.d   Contact information (phone number(s) and email address)

2) <u>General Information</u>. Provide a brief overview of yourself and your organization.

3) <u>Experience</u>. Please identify your experience in providing a SaaS-based or web-hosted SIS platform with native API integrations to relevant third-party systems, including those necessary for business analytics and standard higher education data collection services.

4) <u>Student Lifecycle</u>.
   - 4.a   Does the application have the capacity to support students from the point of inquiry through graduation and as an active alumni/ae?
   - 4.b   Describe how the application provides guided and personalized new-student on-boarding for disparate groups of students, including first-generation students, online-only students, veteran students, adult students, workforce students, continuing education students, gender-specificity and inclusiveness, specialty programs (i.e., Fire Science Programs), etc.
   - 4.c   Describe each touchpoint in the process that can be Customized or Configured, such as inquiry, application, acceptance, enrollment, withdrawal, credit accumulation graduation, transfer, and alumnae/i engagement.
   - 4.d   Describe how the application can assess non-cognitive skills and, based on inputs, provide tips/suggestions for connecting with campus resources.
   - 4.e   Please describe how the application assists students in selecting the appropriate major of study aligned with their interests and career goals.
   - 4.f   Describe how the application assists students with outlining degree paths from beginning to end, including specific course selection and course registration.

4.g   Describe how the application assists students with identifying transfer opportunities to and from other institutions.

5) <u>Non-degree Students</u>. How does the application accommodate students who do not initially seek traditional 2-year degrees?

    5.a   If not highlighted in the preceding section, describe how students who seek and take occasional professional development, certificate, or non-degree training are handled.

    5.b   Can you handle the expected MCCS volume of Non-degree course is 10,000 non-credit program learners.

    5.c   Describe how students who accumulate training and certifications can view and potentially apply such accomplishments to degree-granting programs.

    5.d   Describe how badge earners and other non-degree credentialing or achievements are tracked and managed.

    5.e   Describe how program offerings that are not associated with traditional semesters are managed in the application, including course catalog, registration, etc.

    5.f   Describe your degree/program/badge audit functionality or integration with third-party solutions in this space:

        5.f.i Can it be associated with the catalog year of a student's entry into a degree program?

        5.f.ii Can it be utilized to track continuing education, workforce development, student badges, and keep the continuity of the student if they transition from continuing education, workforce, non-matriculated to matriculated students? (Not necessarily in that order).

6) <u>Student Success</u>. Does the application have the capacity to help faculty and staff identify struggling students so that they can intervene as early as possible?

    6.a   Describe how the application provides actionable information regarding students' academic, financial, and behavioral performance and milestones.

    6.b   Describe how the application facilitates advising and student engagement for academic success.

    6.c   Describe how this application tracks the progress of discrete groups of students and response to intervention (i.e., academic probation, unsatisfactory academic progress, non-payment, missing or failed pre-requisite course, etc.).

7) <u>Communications and Engagement</u>. Describe how the application allows for communications and engagement tracking with students.

    7.a   Include information on how the application supports calls to action such as scheduling appointments, registering for courses, completing FAFSA forms, uploading required immunization records or other documentation, paying tuition bills, etc.

    7.b   Include information on the communication modalities supported natively and through integrations, including text, email, social media, etc.

7.c   Describe how the application allows for the development and collection of notes regarding student interactions, such as advisor notes, tutoring notes, student activity participation, and other support service-related notes.

7.d   If not addressed previously, describe other of the application's contact/customer relationship management capabilities.

8) <u>Analytics and Reporting</u>. Does the application have comprehensive data analytics and reporting capabilities?

8.a   Describe your reporting tools and solutions.

8.b   Do you have a proprietary reporting tool or use an industry standardize tool?

8.c   Does your reporting tool accommodate reporting on converted legacy data?

8.d   Describe the various aggregate and student-level reports available through this application.

8.e   Describe how this application can provide demand for courses (specific courses and certain date/time options) from a current and future-state perspective.

8.f   Describe how this application assesses risk based on student academic performance, actionable behavior, and inventory of non-cognitive survey responses.

8.g   Describe how this application provides historical trend data.

8.h   Describe how this application can support the automatic filing of required Federal, State, and grant-based reports.

8.i   Provide a sample of common reports.

9) <u>Functional Components or Modules</u>. Briefly describe the functional organization or modules that comprise the SIS. If third-party products are required, please highlight them.

9.a   Admission, recruitment, and readmission.

9.b   Registrar functions, including student record management.

9.c   Business office, including but not limited to billing, receivables management, accounts payable, and cashiering.

9.d   Financial Aid.

9.e   Course scheduling, course catalog & numbering processes.

9.f   Classroom assignments.

9.g   Curriculum management and degree audits.

9.h   Housing management.

9.i   Advising / Program planning.

9.j   Grant management, fundraising, foundation management, and other philanthropy.

9.k   Faculty management.

9.l   Student employment and work-study.

9.m   General ledger, accounting, and budgeting.

10) <u>Configuration and Customization</u>.

10.a   Describe how the application supports adaptation to MCCS and College needs through Customization and Configuration.

10.b How does the application simultaneously support system-wide and individual College needs, including branding, public portal, term variations like start times, and multiple terms open simultaneously that segment or cross over traditional (e.g., Fall/Spring) term segments.

10.c Describe how the application would enable disparate college-by-college curriculum and non-degree programs offerings.

10.d How are work-flow creations accomplished, including how a college-specific, non-standard practice is accommodated.

11) <u>Third-Party Integrations</u>. Describe the application's integration approach and capabilities, including but are not limited to:

11.a Integration with (delineate out-of-the-box or custom):
- Brightspace LMS
- PowerFAIDS
- FAFSA
- SAT
- College Common Application
- IPEDS

11.b Provide a complete list of pre-built, third-party vendors integrations.

11.c Describe API architecture for other integrations.

11.d Describe your native document management and scanning processes and integration products.

12) <u>Training</u>:

12.a How do you provide initial training, go-live training, and support to sustain the existing user knowledge base and new staff on-boarding needs?

12.b Provide representative, sample course materials (e.g., printed, online).

13) <u>Service Level Agreement (SLA)</u>. Describe your SLA structure and levels, including:

13.a Describe your contractually guaranteed service levels for system availability.

13.b Describe your maintenance procedures and maintenance windows.

13.c Describe your service-level objectives and corresponding service-level credits.

13.d Describe your service credit requests and payment procedure.

14) <u>Technical Specifications</u>:

14.a Generally, describe your architecture, including identification of major third-party platforms or vendors on which the application relies (e.g., AWS/Azure).

14.b What is the database you use for your system?

14.c Identify third-party cyber-security certifications and attestations (e.g., ISO 27001, CSA, etc.), including their relevant scope.

14.d Describe your support for the system software, database, upgrades, and maintenance.

14.e Describe how applications are accessible over the internet using commonly available browsers, including the latest versions of Edge, Safari, Firefox, and Chrome.

14.f Describe how your application can be accessed through a mobile app, including Android and iOS devices.

14.g	Describe how your application is physically and logically secure by documenting system redundancy, daily backup of data, and same-day data restore of lost files with business continuity and disaster recovery provisions.

14.h	Describe how the application allows multiple participants across multiple colleges to be logged in and using the system simultaneously. The application must support the principles of "Universal Design" (i.e., be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design).

15)	<u>Access Barriers</u>. Describe your systems ability to address the access barrier:
15.a	The solution meets the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 accessibility standards.
15.b	The solution is screen-reader-accessible.
15.c	The solution allows the user to customize the look of the display (color, size, and so on).
15.d	The solution preserves accessibility features and markup when importing or exporting content.
15.e	The solution meets local, State, and national-level accessibility regulations (for example, The Maine Human Rights Act ("MHRA") and, in the US, Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and its implementing regulations).

16)	<u>Professional Services</u>. Describe any pre-installation services offered:
16.a	Describe the general implementation process, including the period from procurement to go-live, technical support, and end-user training. Highlight aspects relevant to MCCS's current state.
16.b	Include a notional project timeline covering major aspects and phases of a product implementation, such as key milestones, activities, and responsible parties.
16.c	Describe how end-user training is incorporated in implementation.

17)	<u>Roadmap and Vision</u>. Describe your product vision and roadmap. Include discussion of SaaS/cloud-native development, strategy for integration with other tools and products, and approach to Customization versus Configuration.

18)	<u>References</u>. Please provide three recent community college or university system references with the application version and its date in production. One of these references must speak to the implementation experience and support experience within the last two years.

PART III   KEY RFI EVENTS AND PROCESSES

1) Informational Meeting
- 1.a The MCCS will sponsor an Informational Meeting concerning this RFI beginning at the date, time, and location shown on the RFI cover page. The purpose of the Informational Meeting is to provide interested parties with additional information related to this RFI, field questions, and clarify any questions as to this RFI request. Interested attendees should email the RFI Coordinator to gain the meeting credentials.

2) Questions
- 2.a General Instructions
  - 2.a.i It is the responsibility of each interested party to examine the entire RFI and seek clarification in writing if they do not understand any information or instructions.
  - 2.a.ii Interested parties should use Appendix B – Submitted Questions Form – for submission of questions.
  - 2.a.iii The Submitted Questions Form must be submitted by email and received by the RFI Coordinator, identified on the cover page of this RFI, as soon as possible but no later than the date and time specified on the RFI cover page.
  - 2.a.iv Submitted questions must include the RFI Title in the subject line of the email. The MCCS assumes no liability for assuring accurate, complete, or on-time email transmission and receipt.

3) Question & Answer Summary
  - 3.a.i Responses to all questions will be compiled in writing and posted on the following website: https://www.mccs.me.edu/request-for-proposals/
  - 3.a.ii It is the responsibility of all interested parties to go to this website to obtain a copy of the Question & Answer Summary. Only those answers issued in writing on this website will be considered binding.

4) Submitting the Response

- 4.a Responses Due
  - 4.a.i Responses must be received no later than the date and time listed in the timeline above.

- 4.b Delivery Instructions
  - 4.b.i Responses must be submitted to the RFI Coordinator via email, listed on the cover page of this RFI document.

5) Response Format
- 5.a Responses to this RFI may be developed in a manner that suits the Respondent. A list of critical questions is included within the RFI, and all submissions, regardless of the format, will be reviewed. Respondents are asked to be brief and to respond to as many questions as possible within the RFI. Number each response to correspond to the relevant question or instruction of the RFI to allow comparison and clarity.

PART IV   REVIEW OF RESPONSES RECEIVED

1) Presentations
   1.a   Respondents will be invited to provide 4-hour presentations to MCCS to highlight their application's capabilities concerning the requirements in Section B above. Respondents who do not offer SAAS or web-hosted versions of their SIS platform may not be invited to present. Two weeks before the first scheduled session, specific use cases and user stories will be posted to guide the presentations.

   1.b   The MCCS reserves the right to communicate and/or schedule secondary interviews/presentations with Respondents, if needed, to obtain clarification of information contained in the responses received and/or additional information to enhance marketing research efforts.

2) General Information

   2.a   The MCCS will review responses received for the purpose of gathering information and market research only. The MCCS will not score or rate responses received.

   2.b   The MCCS reserves the right to communicate with Respondents, if needed, to obtain clarification of information contained in the responses received and/or additional information to enhance marketing research efforts.

APPENDIX A

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Maine Community College System

Student Information System (SIS)

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Lead Point of Contact - Name/Title:	
Organization Name (if applicable):	
Tel:	**Fax:**
Email:	**Website:**
Street Address:	
City/State/Zip:	

APPENDIX B

Maine Community College System

Student Information System (SIS)

Organization/Responder's Name:	

RFI Section & Page Number	Question

* If a question is not related to any section of the RFI, state "N/A" under "RFI Section & Page Number".
** Add additional rows, if necessary.