

Arkansas Early Childhood Professional Services Call for Proposals
Guidance for Applicants
Fall 2025

In August 2025, the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) released the Early Childhood Professional Services Call for Proposals to seek qualified vendors interested in providing **coaching, training, and technical assistance** to the Arkansas early childhood workforce. To ensure vendors have the necessary information to successfully complete an application, ADE has developed this guidance document and an FAQ, and hosted a webinar (recording and slides). Please direct any additional questions to ARECEQuality@ade.arkansas.gov by September 15, 2025.

Guidance Contents

This document will guide all vendors applying to offer early childhood professional services funded through the Arkansas Department of Education's (ADE) updated Call for Proposal process. The document contains the following information:

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Opportunity Overview

The Arkansas Department of Education seeks qualified vendors to provide coaching, training, and technical assistance to the state's early childhood providers and educators. Professional services contracts funded by this opportunity shall begin July 1, 2026, with five-year initial award contracts and an annual evaluation. ADE plans to award multiple contracts totaling \$7-10 million. Multiple vendors with overlapping skills, subject matter expertise, and geographies served may be selected.

All local leads will receive a complete list of the contracts awarded to vendors serving their counties. Local leads will coordinate with vendors to distribute services to their counties based on provider need and county data (e.g., CLASS scores).

Applications are due by 4:00 pm on November 1, 2025. To apply, interested vendors must email a completed application to ARECEQuality@ade.arkansas.gov. A completed application includes:

- Narrative Application and relevant supporting artifacts (PDF)
- Coverage and Price Schedule (Excel)

Incomplete applications will not be considered.

ADE will review all applications and make recommendations for contracts to the State Board. **It is important to note that contracts will be made for the maximum amount a vendor can receive for providing professional services.** Vendors will invoice ADE based on units of services provided to the Arkansas early childhood workforce. If a vendor does not provide the requisite number of units under their contract, they will only be compensated for the units actually provided. ADE may amend the maximum units based on unit delivery, in order to ensure funds are maximized to meet professional services demand.

Timeline

ADE anticipates following the timeline below in order to award contracts:

Call for Proposals webinar	August 7, 2025
Call for Proposals released	August 11, 2025
Proposal submission date	November 1, 2025
Vendors notified of recommendations	January 2026
State Board reviews contracts	March 2026
Contracts issued	Following Board Meeting
Vendors begin offering units <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Job-embedded coaching model- Training- Technical assistance (on-site and virtual)	As soon as July 2026

Application Overview

The application asks vendors to propose the following:

- The types of professional services they are qualified to offer
- The subject areas they are qualified to address through professional services
- The per-unit cost to offer those subject-specific units
- The geographies within which they are able to offer those units

Multiple vendors with overlapping skills, subject matter expertise, and geographies served may be selected. Vendors are encouraged to be thoughtful about their organizational capacity, expertise, and willingness to collaborate with state and local leadership when completing their applications.

In their applications, vendors must specify the following components they seek funding for:

- Professional service unit types
- Subject areas
- Geographies

Vendors can apply to provide any portion of professional services and subject areas, either statewide or in the counties of their choice. Some, all, or none of a vendor's proposal may result in a professional services contract.

Professional Services Unit Types: The following professional service unit types shall be funded as a result of this Call for Proposals:

- Job-embedded Coaching
- Group Training
- Technical Assistance (virtual and on-site)

Subject Areas: The following subject areas shall be the only approved subject areas funded as a result of this Call for Proposals:

- Adult-Child Interactions
- High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) and Child Assessment
- Foundational Support

Geographies: Vendors must indicate the geographies within which they are willing to provide professional services. The minimum geographic unit is a **county**. Vendors may apply to provide services for one county, multiple counties, or statewide. Professional services vendors are required to collaborate closely with the local leads in the geographies they are awarded to serve.

Important Definitions

Unit definitions

- Job-embedded coaching: A unit is defined as a 60-75-minute block of coaching, with at least half of it provided in the classroom and an accompanying debrief to the educator and manager.
- Training: A unit is defined as a 120-minute group session with a minimum of 5 participants.
- Technical assistance (on-site): A unit is defined as a 30-45 minute on-site support session focused on collaboratively addressing specific goals.
- Technical assistance (virtual): A unit is defined as a 15-30 minute phone or Zoom conversation to support an educator or director through a question or concern.

Subject Area Definitions

- Adult-Child Interactions: Professional services for directors and educators in improving adult-child interactions in classrooms and centers. Support for adult-child interactions includes any support towards exchanges that foster meaningful learning, social and emotional development, and school readiness.
- High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) and Child Assessment: Professional services used to support the implementation of high-quality curriculum and assessment.
- Foundational Support: Professional services for new educators and directors.

Professional Services Matrix

Vendors should use the professional services matrix below to understand which units and subject areas are allowable to be funded. Please note that not all unit types will be funded for each topic. The

Subject Area		Adult-Child Interactions			HQIM and Child Assessment				Foundational Support			
Topic		Increasing familiarity with high-quality adult-child interaction tools	Supporting educators on high-quality adult-child interactions	Supporting leaders on high-quality adult-child interactions	Curriculum training	Curriculum implementation	Assessment training	Assessment implementation	New director support	New educator support	Business support for directors	New classroom setup
Unit	Virtual TA	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	
	On-site TA		X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X
	Training	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	
	Job-Embedded Coaching		X			X						

allowable units were determined based on best delivery practices for each topic.

Overview of Arkansas' Professional Services Contracts Model

Vendor eligibility	<p>Eligible vendors include qualified organizations and individuals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universities • Education Service Cooperatives • Government agencies • Local early childhood lead organizations • Nonprofit and for-profit organizations • Other educational vendors or individuals with demonstrated experience delivering early childhood professional services
Vendor qualifications	<p>Proposals completed in the provided application template must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of relevant experience • Staff qualifications • Capacity to deliver high-quality services across the selected counties <p>At the proposal stage, vendors must demonstrate their qualifications and propose a clear service model. At the point of delivery, vendors must maintain those qualifications, ensure staff credentials remain current, and comply with reporting and service documentation expectations. Vendors must also have a plan to build</p>

	the capacity needed and ensure that staff have the necessary skills and knowledge to deliver high-quality support to educators year-round.
Allowable units	<p>Vendors may apply to deliver any combination of the following professional service units:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job-Embedded Coaching • Training • Technical Assistance (virtual and on-site)
Allowable subject areas	<p>Only the following subject areas are eligible under this call:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult-Child Interactions • High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM) and Child Assessment • Foundational Support
Contract timeline	Contracts will begin as soon as July 1, 2026, with a 5-year initial term and an annual review.
Contract payment terms	<p>If selected, vendors will be awarded a unit-based contract per unit delivered each month up to the maximum units in alignment with their approved scope. Vendors must submit monthly invoices for units provided.</p> <p>ADE may amend the contract to adjust maximum units up or down based on demand, performance, and feedback.</p>
Considerations for Setting Unit Costs	<p>When determining a proposed unit cost, vendors must account for all relevant expenses associated with delivering that unit. These include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personnel costs (e.g., trainer time, support staff) • Any fees associated with conducting the unit (venue costs, materials and supplies, printing) • Travel costs • Other associated costs <p>In proposing a unit cost, vendors should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their capacity to deliver the number of proposed units for the proposed geographies at that cost • Their ability to demonstrate impact (including both quality and scale) for the cost amount if awarded the contract • The competitiveness of the per-unit cost for the unit delivered
Contract monitoring and accountability	Vendors must submit documentation monthly showing that the units delivered meet state requirements, participate in ADE's feedback collection processes with professional services recipients, and attend quarterly vendor stepbacks with ADE's team.

	<p>If the vendor consistently does not meet the goals of the contract or performance indicators set by the state, the Department of Education may terminate the contract.</p>
Application requirements	<p>Each vendor must submit an application that asks for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject areas and topics they propose to deliver • Types of units for each topic they propose to deliver • Justification for the service of each subject area and unit they propose to deliver <p>In addition, each vendor must submit a Coverage and Price Schedule that asks for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unit cost for each service type • The counties they intend to serve (at a minimum, one county) • Maximum number of units offered per subject area <p>Additional attachments may be necessary to demonstrate their capacity to support early childhood providers in response to a community need relevant to the particular subject area and unit they are applying for.</p>
Vendor counties	<p>Vendors may indicate whether they propose to serve the entire state or specific counties in the Coverage and Price Schedule.</p> <p>The smallest allowable area of service is one whole county.</p>
Vendor payment process	<p>Job-embedded coaching, training, and on-site technical assistance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vendors will be paid through unit-based monthly invoices for services delivered, up to the maximum number of contracted units. Payment is based solely on documented and verified service delivery per county. <p>Virtual technical assistance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vendors will be paid a one-time amount based on the unit cost of one county for the year, multiplied by the number of counties served.
Accountability measures	<p>Once under contract, ADE will evaluate vendors' performance through a range of indicators, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly service documentation and billing review • Annual contract performance evaluations • Feedback surveys from providers and local leads • Participation in improvement activities and data sharing