



Request for Information:
Digital Tools for Children's Savings Accounts

Frequently Asked Questions

For additional questions, contact:
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Q. Can the City of Boston select a vendor from the RFI vendor submittals, or would the City issue an RFP as the next step in the procurement process?

A. We will not be selecting a vendor from RFI submissions. Rather, we will issue an RFP after receiving and reviewing all RFI responses. The vendor will then be selected through the RFP process.

Q. Can the City make a sample contract available?

A. Unfortunately, we cannot provide a sample contract as we do not know exactly what the contract will entail yet. The contract terms will be more clearly identified in the RFP and more fully negotiated between the selected vendor and the City.

Q. Is the City leaning toward a certain type of savings incentive?

A. At this time, we are open to a variety of options, including 1:1 matches as well as potential attendance record and performance-based incentives.

Q. What is the Office of Workforce Development's (OWD) role?

A. OWD, through its Office of Financial Empowerment, will be highly engaged with the CSA project, overseeing programmatic aspects and engaging community partners and families.

Q. Will the technical partner be able to help with programmatic aspects as well?

A. Yes, the technical partner will play a major role in making sure CSAs are accessible and usable, so overlapping roles into programmatic aspects are likely.

Q. Do respondents to the future RFP need to have a fully-developed product at time of application?

A. Not necessarily, as we are looking for a technical partner that is flexible and dynamic. However, we do have a short timeline, which would require building and testing a minimum viable product (this is something we hope to be informed about through this RFI) by pilot launch.

Q. Are there elements of this CSA program that will differ from San Francisco's program?

A. We are carefully studying the successes of the San Francisco program and hope to imitate those successful aspects. At the same time, we are also looking to place a strong emphasis on family engagement. Also, instead of having the technical product tied to a financial institution, we are looking at more dynamic options.

Q. How integrated will the financial partner be?

A. We are still speaking with potential financial partners, but we expect the financial partner to be particularly integrated in regards to real-time data sharing.

Q. Regarding ownership of the technical product, is there a certain type of relationship preferred?

A. No, we actually prefer not to own anything as it is important that the product is dynamic and keeps developing. However, it is critical that we own all the data and can access the data through on-demand requests.

Q. What other conversations is the City having?

A. Right now, we are in talks with a financial institution as well as Boston Public Schools.

Q. Will the engagement strategy be a part of the RFP, or will engagement be a more internal process?

A. This really depends on the responses to the RFP, but we want to make sure that we can provide – on a technical side – what families need to be engaged with the CSA product. Doorways to Dreams (D2D) is still working on assembling research findings that will inform our outreach strategies.

Q. What type of financial institution is the City currently in talks with?

A. At this point, we are having conversations with a bank.

Q. If the program is successful before the end of the 3 year pilot, would the City consider launching the program universally in year 2?

A. Potentially, but we do need a minimum amount of data before we consider launching universally, and the 3 year pilot is designed to provide us with such data.

Q. What will the City be testing in the pilot years?

A. We will be experimenting with multiple aspects of the CSA program, particularly incentives as well as data sharing methods.

Q. What schools will be participating in the CSA pilot?

A. The 3-5 participating schools will be selected through a RFP process.

Q. What is the projected timing of the RFP for a technical partner?

A. We hope to have the RFP out by mid-October, select a vendor by December, and execute a contract by January 1, 2016.

Q. Will technical platform pieces need to be catered to certain disabilities or languages?

A. While we encourage accessible products, we know that certain features are harder to incorporate than others. Please describe the accessible features that would be hardest to include in your RFI response, so we have an idea of what is feasible with our timeline.

Q. After the pilot program, will the pilot CSA accounts close and a new universal product launch?

A. We hope not, as we are looking to involve long term partners that will eliminate the need for starting over before launching CSAs universally.

Q. When will the pilot program launch?

A. The pilot is scheduled to launch in Fall 2016 at the beginning of the 2016-2017 school year.