



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

School Photography Services

TO:	All interested parties
SUBJECT:	RFP for School Photography Contract 2021-22
DEADLINE:	March 22, 2021 at 11:00 a.m.

PART I - GENERAL INFORMATION

BACKGROUND

Our district is located in the greater Burlington area and serves the communities of Essex Town, the Village of Essex Junction, and Westford. EWSD is committed to “growing hearts and minds for a better today and tomorrow: every day, every way, every one.” In 2017, the former Chittenden Central Supervisory Union and former Essex Town School District merged to form the Essex Westford School District with this new focus.

The Essex Westford School District serves approximately 4,500 preschool-through-12th-grade students in 10 schools across our three communities. We are one of the state’s largest and most highly-respected school systems, employing close to a thousand teachers and staff with an \$80 million-dollar-plus operating budget.

Essex is Vermont’s second most-populated community and is nestled between the Green Mountains and Lake Champlain. The town of Westford lies just north of Essex and has historically been an agricultural community. The EWSD community is located minutes from the city of Burlington.

To learn more about the District, visit <https://youtu.be/FcGPNryDq4I> or ewsd.org/Page/110 .

SERVICES SOLICITED

EWSD needs photography services for the following schools and district departments:

- School Pictures (Grades PK-12)
- Staff Identification Badges
- Student Identification Badges

Building	# Students	# Staff
Hiawatha Elementary	218	51
Summit Street Elementary	230	52
Essex Elementary	410	90
Founders Memorial	425	70
Thomas Fleming	237	54
Westford School	190	35
Essex Middle School	425	67
Albert D Lawton Intermediate	356	75
Essex High School	1200	203
ACE Program	25	5
EWSD District Offices	--	40
Property Services	--	50
Information Technology	--	20
Child Nutrition	--	50
Transportation	--	25
Safety	--	10
Total	3,716	897

Each vendor shall provide the information required by the Contract Documents. The vendor shall sign the proposal, all addenda, and the proposal sheet. The individual(s) signing the proposal must initial any corrections, erasures, or changes. Proposals signed by an agent must be accompanied by evidence of the agent's authority unless such evidence has been previously furnished to EWSD.

1. EWSD does not pay Federal Tax or local retail sales or use tax. Tax exemption certificates will be provided upon request.
2. The vendor may offer an "equal" product or product exceeding Specifications as an alternate proposal. Final determination of whether or not an item is an "approved equal" remains with EWSD.
3. EWSD expects that all proposals will remain valid for the term of this proposal.
4. Contract award to vendor(s) shall be for one year (2021-22) award as determined by EWSD with an annual review and option to renew for up to three subsequent years.
5. EWSD expressly reserves the right to:
 - a) Waive minor deviations from the specifications when it is determined that the total cost to the District of the deviating proposal is lower than the lowest conforming proposal which meets all aspects of the specifications, and the overall function of the goods or services, or both, specified in the deviating proposal is equal to or greater than that of the conforming proposal.
 - b) Waive any defect, irregularity, or informality in any proposal procedure.
 - c) Reject any or all proposals.
 - d) Amend a proposal before the proposal review date to extend or make changes to specifications.
 - e) Procure any item by other means.
 - f) Increase or decrease the quantity specified in the proposal, unless the offer specifies otherwise.

TIMEFRAME

All proposals (with two copies attached) shall be delivered and a digital copy emailed as below by **March 22, 2021, at 11:00am** at which time bids will be opened in a public Zoom meeting (contact nwheel@ewsd.org for the link to access the meeting).

Natasha Wheel - District Operations
(RFP Photography Services)
Essex Westford School District
51 Park Street
Essex Junction, VT 05452
Email: nwheel@ewsd.org

If there are questions regarding this RFP process, please contact Natasha Wheel in District Operations at (802) 857-7051 or email nwheel@ewsd.org. Proposals must be delivered to and received before the deadline noted above. There will be no exceptions. Proposals received after the deadline will not be considered.

PART II - PROPOSAL CONTENT AND PROCESS

PURPOSE

Utilizing a Request for Proposals (RFP), EWSD is requesting proposals from companies/businesses (Respondents) for photography services. The District is seeking to contract with a photography provider that will provide excellent customer service, high-quality pictures, fast turnaround, and innovative methods of delivery of said services. EWSD is one of the largest districts in Vermont and is seeking to contract with a company that is continually looking for innovative ways to serve its customers. EWSD is committed to ensuring services will be beneficial and accessible to all students and their families, as well as provide added value to District Operations. School photos are increasingly used by school district officials to manage the safety of our campuses through ID badges of students and staff. As a newer merged district that seeks to continue to create cohesion and alignment across ten schools, we are seeking to continue to select a single photography provider to perform essential services for our families and our District as a whole.

NOTES TO ALL VENDORS

The term “District” means Essex Westford School District (EWSD). The term “Vendor” or “Proposer” or “photographer” means the person, firm, company, or corporation who is submitting this RFP for consideration to deliver school photography services for students in all grades and staff photography (excludes photography for athletics programs, clubs, and yearbooks at various schools).

- Vendor must keep EWSD advised of any changes in order(s) status.
- Questions regarding this proposal must be in writing to nwheel@ewsd.org
- All pricing and any award under this RFP shall be good for EWSD and any associated schools purchasing under the contract.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

The selected vendor shall provide all aspects of photography services for our school district as described below:

GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

1. Photography will be provided for fall School Picture Day for students in grades PK-12 and all staff. Spring photos, special event photos, athletic photos, and yearbooks are excluded from this RFP.
2. Specify the type of equipment that will be used, such as paper and camera. Premium photographic paper must be used. The photographer must use equipment that centers the subject and adjusts for head size, skin, and hair tone. Modern backgrounds and photography approaches are preferred.
3. All photos must be guaranteed unconditionally by the Vendor. Families reserve the right to reject any or all photos which they believe to be of poor quality. The Vendor will be responsible for retakes at no

charge. All refunds must be handled by the Vendor who will provide digital or paper forms to be completed by the parent/guardian.

4. The Vendor will provide written notices for parent/guardian notification purposes. The notices will include:
 - o School name, picture date, retake date, packages available, and prices.
 - o Recommendations on clothing and hair for School Picture Day
 - o Ordering information
 - o Digital photo options
 - o Local Customer Service telephone number and email contact for families to contact the company directly with any concerns. This phone number should also appear on all materials and photo packages.
 - o A description of online payment ordering options
5. Individual pictures will be taken in the fall on a pre-pay basis. School Administration will be contacted for details on School Picture Day arrangements and two (2) photographers and cameras must be assigned to each building.
6. A fall class photo will be provided in the style desired by the school. Class photos will be composites of each individual student's school picture.
7. The vendor will collect all the money before or at the time photos are taken. Payment envelopes will be opened at the time the pictures are taken. All accounting and recording of the student package selection must be performed by the photographer. At least one trained individual should accompany photographers to assist with recordkeeping and to ensure before taking portraits that the student is prepared and the background is complementary to skin and hair tone. Vermont sales tax will be paid by the Vendor.
8. The photographer must return at a later date for retakes at no additional cost. Retake photos will be for a student dissatisfied for any reason with the original photos taken, as well as for students absent on the original school picture day. Retake photos must be uniform with similar head sizes, centering, and background as original takes. An alphabetical listing of students for the photo retakes will be provided to the school by the photographer.
9. The vendor will send re-orders directly to families; they will not be handled by the school. The District is not responsible for collecting payment for school photos. The vendor must offer an online platform for families to purchase school photos with secure online payment options at no additional cost. A paper order form option shall be offered for families as well with payment and ordering handled directly by the vendor.
10. Partial packages will not be sent to the school. Students who did receive their packages, but who paid for their pictures, will have photos done on retake day.
11. Original photos and ID badges must be delivered on or before October 1. Retakes must be delivered by November 1. All photos and IDs must be delivered to the District within three weeks of the photos being taken.
12. The Vendor shall provide up to 20 complimentary packages free of charge in each school for students financially unable to purchase a photo package, provided at the discretion of the school administrator.
13. Photographs shall not include Vendor or company name or brand. The photographer must have available and use on original and retake days different shades of background to complement varying skin and hair tones.
14. The Vendor will capture photos of each staff member and student to provide a branded ID badge to the District. Access to digital photos of students and staff will be provided to the District. All ID badges will include the School Safety Response Commands on the back.

15. All District Office, Property Services, Technology, Child Nutrition, Transportation, and Safety Staff will be photographed at their respective work locations. Employees unable to be photographed on the scheduled dates may choose to be photographed at any other location on makeup photography days. The staff member will have their photo ID produced with the designated information and branding selected for their assigned work location regardless of the building where they had their photo taken.
16. Badges will be constructed from durable PVC plastic, approximately 3 ½ x 2 ¼” with hole-punch and a District branded lanyard. Staff ID must be compatible with the specification for building access prox card hole-punch to fit both ID and prox card together. Color schemes will be year and school-specific in consultation with the District administration. The badges will contain the following information: Front: Employee/Student Photo (cropped as a headshot), School Name, Department Name, School Year, Grade Level, and Logo. Back: Barcode, District Emergency Response Commands on the back. The design and layout for each year’s ID badge will be distinct and developed in consultation with District Operations. The vendor shall provide staff and student staff identification badges (IDs) as specified with RFID. All ID badges will be delivered with a breakaway lanyard. Vendors may provide alternative ID badge holders such as vinyl pockets or ID clips in addition to the breakaway lanyards.
17. Digital files for all staff and student photos will be provided to the District’s Technology Department by October 1st. The naming convention must include each student/staff first name, middle initial, last name, and list each student/staff ID number and school. Final approval for naming convention and ID background is required from District technology staff.
18. Distribution of Portraits Packages and IDs. The Vendor must sort all portrait packages and IDs by grade level and then alphabetically and be delivered to each location. The Vendor must follow a quality control check process to prevent errors and ensure the accuracy of materials provided. Deliverables must be provided within 3 weeks of capture.
19. Vendor must provide a dedicated customer service representative with night and weekend hours for families and staff.
20. For each School Picture Day, the vendor must provide two cameras and two photographers unless agreed upon by the school administrator.
21. Vendor will offer families a photo CD/DVD/Flash Drive or digital equivalent to purchase with copyright release.

School Picture Day Expectations

Vendor will collaboratively partner with EWSD school’s and department’s to ensure a successful School Picture Day that reflects the following:

- **Organization.** The process of capturing photos should make it easy for students and staff to move through the steps as efficiently as possible. For each school Picture Day, two photographers and cameras should be provided onsite to streamline the process. For large schools, consult with schools to consider two picture days to reduce lost instructional time in the day and to improve flow. Vendor will provide composite class photos instead of whole class group photos. Schools and departments will provide vendor with Photo Day schedules of when students and staff will have their pictures taken at least a week in advance with a plan for how to access the space where photos will be taken. We ask the vendor to provide an outdoor option for School Picture Day. Schools will plan for an indoor alternate location in case of inclement weather.
- **Professionalism.** Photographers must have experience with working in schools and especially with young children. Photographers should have an amiable and patient demeanor at all times, especially in dealing with young students. Vendor will ensure photographers are appropriately screened and undergo background checks before being assigned to work in our schools.

- **Accuracy and Turnaround Time.** Systems will be in place to ensure that images are correctly matched with student and staff data to reduce errors. Vendor must have a process in place to verify images and data before sending photos or badges to schools or departments. The Vendor will have lab capacity to process and turnaround photos in ten days or less.
- **Product and Service Quality.** Photographers will have a system in place to ensure that high-quality images are captured from students and staff to reduce the volume of retakes needed. The Vendor will demonstrate responsiveness to concerns and issues raised by families about school picture purchases. Vendor will also be asked to share data on orders and parent satisfaction with the process as part of the vendor evaluation process.

Photos must be taken no later than September 15th on set dates arranged with School Administration in each building. The logistics and scheduling of School Picture Days must be finalized by August 1st and submitted in writing to District Operations by the Vendor.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

These specifications apply to all locations and digital deliveries only:

1. The Technology Department contact will provide student and staff data such as a unique identifier, individual names. This information will be provided to School Administration at least 7 days before each building's photo day or as otherwise arranged. The vendor will coordinate with the Technology Department to clarify specific format requirements for all data from the District. By August 1, the Vendor will send a request to the District Technology Department at mmeier@ewsd.org for exact data reporting information, including agreed-upon format, for student database use (file export from district student information system), etc.
Essex Westford School District
Attn: Technology Department
(Mike Meier)
51 Park Street, Essex Junction, VT 05452
2. Initial digital photos must be received by the District Technology Department (Mike Meier) no later than October 1. Digital retake photos may be provided after this date as needed but must be delivered to the Technology Department (Mike Meier) within 14 days of the date taken.
3. Two copies of removable media (CD-ROM, DVD-ROM, Flash Drive) or multiple downloads from a secure FTP server containing digital images of the photos of all the students in the school for each building for each photoshoot must be sent to the address listed above or access instructions can be emailed to mmeier@ewsd.org.
4. Digital photos must be high-quality JPEG, a minimum of at least 640px by 800px at 96 dpi.
5. Vendor may provide the district with full access to a secure photo management portal with all student and staff images for each photoshoot if possible.
6. Each picture file on the Administrative Software Photo CD or portal should be in a 2 to 3 aspect ratio (2 relating to width, and 3 relating to height) and be a traditional headshot type photo for each individual.
7. The file name of each jpg picture file on the Administrative Software Photo CD or additional set of CDs should be the name of the student/employee including Middle Initial (Include middle initial if provided with data extract) such as Jane Doe A.jpg.
8. The Admin Data CD must include a reference file that contains the students/employees id (supplied by district) and the referenced named jpg file provided in a format like: "1003020", "Jane Doe A.jpg" (no preceding P like on ID card).

9. Staff pictures files and student pictures files should be in separate folders or otherwise separated on the Administrative Software Photo CD or portal.

The vendor, within the scope of this RFP, shall identify dates of meeting times to serve as a means of quality control and constructive feedback throughout the life of this contract. These meetings can be scheduled with District Operations to ensure needs are being met and EWSD is satisfied with the services provided. It is recommended that these meetings take place once per quarter.

REFERENCES

Vendors must submit three (3) recent references from previous projects similar in scope and complexity to that described in this RFP that the vendor has performed in the last three years. Project scope and complexity should be similar to that required by this RFP. Vendors who have provided prior service in EWSD in the past three (3) years do not need to provide references. Responses should include the following:

Organization Name
Contact Person Name and Title
Contact Phone Number Contact
Address
Description of Work Provided

COST

Cost schedules being proposed are to be comprehensive and are to include all components and services necessary to meet the requirements of this RFP. Costs not identified cannot be added or considered at a later time and will not be accepted in the final contract. The Vendor is to provide detailed pricing for each item or service necessary to comply with the requirements of this RFP.

The following picture packages are for equal pricing, proposal comparison purposes only and must be completed. If you have alternate, better value packages, please attach details to the proposal. Cost proposals shall include costs of supervisory personnel, labor, materials, equipment overhead, profit, and all other costs associated with providing the services requested within this RFP.

At least four package options should be available to families. These options should include specified photo sizes and should vary in cost. All proposals must include but are not limited to the following (proposer may offer additional packages):

<u>PACKAGE A</u>	<u>PACKAGE B</u>	<u>PACKAGE C</u>
1 - 8x10 2 - 5x7 4 - 3x5 8 - 2x3 Class Picture (composite)	2 - 8x10 4 - 5x7 4 - 3x5 12 - 2x3 Class Picture (composite) 8x10 Calendar	2 - 5x7 4 - 3x5 8 - 2x3 Class Picture (composite)

<u>PACKAGE D</u> 3 - 8x10 4 - 5x7 4 - 3x5 16 - 2x3 Class Picture (composite)	<u>PACKAGE E</u> 3 - 8x10 4 - 5x7 4 - 3x5 16 - 2x3 Class Picture (composite)	<u>PACKAGE F</u> 1 - 8x10 3 - 5x7 4 - 3x5 12 - 2x3 Class Picture (composite)
<u>PACKAGE G</u> 4 - 3x5 8 - 2x3 Class Picture (composite)	<u>PACKAGE H</u> 2 - 3x5 4 - 2x3 Class Picture (composite)	

The Vendor will list prices for any add-ons such as digital photos, optional backgrounds, enhancements, etc.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO RESPOND

Respondents who can meet the technical specifications for quality and other terms of this proposal package and who are not debarred and/or suspended from conducting business with the District, federal, and state-funded agencies are invited to respond. By submitting a proposal, the respondent represents to EWSD that it meets the following requirements:

- ☐ Can comply with the required or proposed RFP
- ☐ Has a satisfactory record of integrity and ethics
- ☐ Be otherwise qualified and eligible to receive an award
- ☐ Be in good standing with the applicable national or state associations

GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Procurement of these items shall be following the EWSD's business practice terms as follows:

- 1) EWSD reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received or to cancel or extend in part or its entirety by this Request for Proposal, or make multiple or partial awards.
- 2) Offers provided to EWSD shall be analyzed for what is in the best interest of the Organization and a selection of products shall be made that can include the RFP response offer in its entirety or just a partial acceptance of any package or offer by the awarded vendor/vendors at the District's discretion.
- 3) Award of the purchase agreement or contract shall be made only to a responsible respondent(s), i.e., a respondent who has demonstrated competence to deliver the specified goods/services, a proven record of business integrity and ethics, and the ability to meet the requirements of this RFP.
- 4) When submitting proposals, it is required that the respondent have the necessary professional experience, prior training, and applicable professional judgment to perform the activities or deliver the goods stated in this RFP.
- 5) Proposals may be withdrawn only by delivery of a written request to EWSD before the specified deadline time/date stated in the RFP. The authorized signatory must sign such requests.
- 6) Proposals received will become a part of EWSD's official files without further obligation to the respondents.

- 7) The contents of a successful Proposal may become a contractual obligation if selected for funding. Failure of the Respondent to accept these obligations can result in the cancellation of an award or purchase agreement. EWSD reserves the right to withdraw or reduce the amount of an award or to cancel any contract resulting from this procurement if there is misrepresentation or errors in the specifications, pricing, terms, or Respondent's ability to meet the terms and conditions of this RFP or if adequate funding is not received.
- 8) A response does not commit EWSD to award a purchase agreement or a contract. The District does not commit to reimbursement of any costs incurred in the preparation of response nor commits to pay for any costs incurred before the execution of a formal purchase agreement or contract unless such costs are specifically authorized in writing by EWSD.
- 9) EWSD reserves the right to contact any individual, agency, or employers listed in the RFP, to contact others who may have experience and/or knowledge of the respondent's goods/supplies, relevant performance, qualifications, etc., and to request additional information from any respondents.
- 10) Respondents shall not, under penalty of law, offer any gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value to any officer or employee of the District, or to any consultant, employee, or member of EWSD for the purpose of, or having the effect of, influencing favorable disposition toward their own proposal or any other bid submitted hereunder.
- 11) No employee, officer, or member of the District shall participate in the selection, development of a response to this RFP, award, or administration of a contract supported by the RFP if a conflict of interest, real or apparent, may be involved.
- 12) The District is exempt from Federal, state, and local sales tax. Do not include sales tax in the cost figure. If it is determined that tax was included in the cost figures, it will not be included in the tabulation of any awards.

SELECTION CRITERIA

In evaluating proposals, the following considerations will be taken into account for the award recommendations:

- ☐ Experience & Service
- ☐ Product Quality
- ☐ References/Reputation
- ☐ Value Added Service(s)
- ☐ Cost to Families

Essex Westford School District Operations staff will review the proposals received to determine if they qualify under the RFP specifications. For proposals to be considered and evaluated for selection, the following requirements must be met:

1. The Proposal must be submitted by the due date and time.
2. The Proposal must be complete with original signatures.
3. The Proposal must be for the specific services requested and described in the RFP packet.
4. The Proposal must be submitted in the format described in the RFP Packet.
5. One original (in blue ink and marked as original) and six copies must be submitted.

All proposals will be screened for the inclusion of all required information before release to the evaluation

team. EWSD Operations staff may exclude from further consideration for contract award any non-qualified proposal or portion of a proposal.

EVALUATION

The evaluation criteria and the relative scoring are provided below. The evaluation team will consider these elements as part of its evaluation process. **Cost to Families is not the only criteria used to evaluate proposals.**

CRITERIA	POINTS (TOTAL 120)
1. Experience & Service	30
2. Product Quality	30
3. References/Reputation	15
4. Value Added Service(s)	15
5. Cost to Families	30
TOTAL	120

After evaluation, an award may be made based on the evaluation and ranking, without discussion, clarification, or modification. EWSD may choose to enter into negotiations with respondents based on ranking. EWSD reserves the right to request Best and Final Offers from all qualified respondents.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION AND FORMAT

All proposals must be clearly marked with the vendor's name and address. Proposal packages must be delivered to and received before the deadline. Two (2) copies of the proposal must be mailed and one (1) digital copy must be submitted to the following:

Natasha Wheel - District Operations
(RFP Photography Services)
Essex Westford School District
51 Park Street
Essex Junction, VT 05452
(802) 857-7051
Email: nwheel@ewsd.org

FORMAT

Respondents must complete the Title Page on the following page and include it as the cover sheet for proposals submitted in response to this RFP. (See cover sheet on next page).

A Proposal Submitted in Response to

ESSEX WESTFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT

Request for Proposals for District Photography Services Submitted by:

Company Name

Company Address

Signature of Authorized Person

Federal Employer ID Number

on

(date of proposal submission)

RFP RESPONSE FORMAT & CONTENT

Page/items to return include:

- o Title Page
- o Table of Contents
- o Business Identification
- o Description/Narrative of Services
- o Cost of services/packages
- o Compliance with Specifications
- o Value Added Service(s)
- o Past Performance/Demonstrated Effectiveness/References

Documentation must be complete. Please also ensure the name and full address of the firm are provided.