



August 6, 2019

Stephanie Harrison
Gulf Shores City Schools
300E 16th Ave
Gulf Shores, Alabama 36542

RE: Sole Source Letter for Renaissance Star 360®

Dear Ms. Harrison:

In compliance with state procurement requirements for sole source purchases, we submit this letter as justification to waive the bid process and purchase Star 360 from the sole provider, Renaissance Learning, Inc.®

This letter confirms that Renaissance, located at 2911 Peach Street, Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin, is the sole source provider of the following products and associated materials:

- Renaissance Star 360

Star 360 is a comprehensive pre-K–12 assessment solution that helps educators to accurately measure students' achievement and growth, as well as to identify students' instructional needs. Star 360 includes multiple components that work together to provide educators with a comprehensive view of student achievement:

The Star 360 computer-adaptive tests—Star Early Literacy, Star Reading, and Star Math—are built on sound psychometric theory and years of careful research and development. Teachers and students benefit from the wide range of actionable data that these assessments deliver in minimal testing time. Results are available on score reports that educators can run immediately after students complete a test. These reports display both criterion-referenced and norm-referenced data, present results in graphical, easy-to-read formats, and can be accessed anywhere and anytime.

The computer-adaptive Star 360 assessments are built on item-response theory. This means that the Star 360 software continually tailors the test based on a student's response to the current question—increasing the difficulty after a correct answer and decreasing difficulty after an incorrect answer. In this way, each assessment is built for the individual student, and test blueprint content is concentrated at the student's current performance level. This yields extremely accurate information about the skills that the student has and has not learned, using relatively few test items. Having regular feedback from tests enables educators to adjust their teaching so they can help students achieve personalized learning goals as well as master state standards.

The following key features and qualities of Star 360 make it unique in meeting the needs of schools and districts in the state.

- **Validity and reliability.** The Star 360 computer-adaptive tests have met the high standards for reliability and validity that were set forth by the National Center on Response to Intervention, a trusted source for unbiased evaluation of screening assessments and progress monitoring tools, and have also met the high

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psychometric standards for reliability and validity used for more frequent progress monitoring established by the National Center on Intensive Intervention.

- **Versatility.** Star 360 can be used for a number of purposes, including: universal screening, progress monitoring, differentiating instruction, forecasting state summative test proficiency, mastery of state standards, measuring growth, and measuring teacher effectiveness. Customers who use Houghton Mifflin Harcourt's Into Math or Into Reading curriculum also benefit from an exclusive partnership and integration between these HMH and Renaissance solutions.
- **Comprehensive skills-based reports.** Available immediately after students complete an assessment, the full complement of reports gives and parents essential information about students' learning progress and growth over time.
- **Alignment to state standards.** Star 360 computer-adaptive assessments are aligned with the state standards for reading and math, so students are assessed in terms of the content they are learning in today's classrooms.
- **Ability to predict student performance on state tests.** Star 360 assessment scores are linked with, and can predict performance on, the state summative assessment.
- **Efficiency.** Average testing times are 10–15 minutes for Star Early Literacy, 15–20 minutes for Star Reading, and 20–30 minutes for Star Math.
- **Assessments in English or Spanish.** Star 360 includes Star Spanish, our Spanish-language version of the computer-adaptive tests, for grades K–8.

Star 360 also includes Star Custom, which is an assessment authoring, delivery, scoring, and reporting platform that allows teachers to create tests to assess student mastery of a single skill or a set of closely related skills in reading and math. It includes a robust bank of thousands of items aligned to state-specific learning standards in reading and math, and allows educators to create new items to meet local requirements while informing daily instruction.

Renaissance holds all copyright, patent, trademark and other intellectual property rights to the above products, services and associated materials. Additionally, Renaissance does not sell Star 360 through distributors or third-parties.

We consider this letter to be the required justification to provide schools Star 360 in compliance with state procurement regulations. If you have any questions, or need additional information, please contact me at Chad.Edwards@renaissance.com or (800) 338-4204.

Sincerely,



Chad Edwards
Vice President of US Sales Strategy