

Request for Expression of Interest (RFEI): Enterprise VoIP Solution for the New York City Department of Education

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1. Introduction

The NYC DOE, the largest public school district in the U.S., serves 1.1 million students and employs over 150,000 staff. The Division of Instructional and Information Technology (DIIT) manages the DOE's vast telecommunications infrastructure. This RFEI is issued to explore industry capabilities and inform a future procurement strategy to transition from aging digital PBX systems to a unified, resilient, and cost-effective VoIP ecosystem.

1.1 Objective

The focus of this RFEI is to gather information from Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs), solution providers, and resellers capable of designing, deploying, and supporting a secure, scalable, and modern Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) solution to replace NYC DOE's legacy telephony systems across over 1,800 school and administrative sites.

This RFEI seeks input on:

- Capabilities to provide a modern, feature-rich, secure, and scalable enterprise VoIP platform
- Transition strategies from legacy systems to cloud, hybrid, or on-prem VoIP models
- Integration with Microsoft Teams and NYC DOE systems (e.g., Student Information Systems, HR, ServiceNow)

Focus Areas

- Centralized management
- High availability and disaster recovery
- Seamless integrations and open APIs
- Cost-effectiveness and operational efficiency

1.2 Existing Environment

The NYC DOE currently operates a diverse and aging telephony infrastructure across over 1,800 school and administrative sites, including a mix of Mitel 3300 MiCollab IP-PBX systems, legacy PBX solutions (e.g., NEC, Teltronics), and limited deployments of Cisco Call Manager; while analog POTS lines remain in use for redundancy and emergency functions, the network backbone is supported by high-speed, redundant WAN links and two software-defined data centers, with on-site infrastructure varying significantly in cable type, device density, and VoIP readiness.

School Sites

- 1,800+ schools
- Over 50,000 classrooms
- Some schools house 500+ phones
- Infrastructure limited to CAT3 or CAT5e cabling in many locations
- VoIP deployments limited to a few schools using Cisco Call Manager

Telephony Stack

- ~75% of schools use Mitel 3300 MiCollab IP-PBX
- Remaining use legacy PBX systems (NEC, Teltronics)
- POTS lines maintained for redundancy and essential services (e.g., elevators, alarms, fax)

Administrative Sites

- 30+ locations, with the largest site supporting up to 2,000 devices and 2,500 DID numbers
- Widespread use of Microsoft Teams for collaboration

- Transition in progress toward Cisco Call Manager and Microsoft Teams Calling

Telephony Stack

- Legacy PBX systems remain common
- Analog lines remain for emergency services

1.3 Current Infrastructure Overview

The NYC DOE's current infrastructure is supported by a complex mix of legacy and modern systems, including extensive Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) connectivity, analog and digital voice services, and a citywide network architecture built on high-speed, redundant links, and software-defined data centers.

PSTN Access	NETWORK ARCHITECTURE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,550 active ISDN-PRI circuits • 21,000+ analog (POTS) ports • 95,000+ Direct Inward Dial (DID) numbers • Verizon FIOS and analog trunking support traditional telephony 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supported by two software-defined data centers (SDDCs) • High-speed, redundant WAN links • Schools maintain layered local infrastructure (Power over Ethernet [PoE] switches, firewalls, access points, etc.) • Web filtering and compliance enforced via Zscaler (cloud-based)

See Appendix A- NYC DOE DIIT Network Standards

1.4 Compliance & Regulatory Requirements

All proposed solutions must comply with applicable federal and New York State regulations governing data privacy, security, and telecommunications, particularly those related to educational institutions and emergency services.

FEDERAL REGULATIONS	NEW YORK STATE REGULATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) • Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) • Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) • Enhanced 911 (E911) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NYSED Education Law § 2-d • NYS Encryption Standard (NYS-S14-007) • NYS Access Controls & Authentication (NYS-S20-001) • NYS Information Security Policy (NYS-P03-002)

See Appendix B- NYC DOE Vendor Security Policy

1.5 Desired Solution Characteristics

The DOE seeks a modern, secure, and scalable VoIP solution that aligns with its operational, technical, and compliance needs across a large and diverse educational environment.

- A. User Scope
 - Support for 150,000+ staff across 1,800+ schools
 - Must accommodate parent-facing and multilingual features
- B. Deployment Model
 - Cloud, on-premises, or hybrid options
 - WAN-independent calling capabilities for emergency functions
- C. Integration & Interoperability
 - Microsoft Teams Calling & Presence
 - SIS platforms (e.g., ATS, NYCSA), ServiceNow, HR systems
 - API, webhooks, telemetry, and event-driven integrations
- D. Network & Performance

- ≥99.99% availability for core call services
 - Real-time monitoring of QoS, MOS, jitter via RTCP
 - Must handle large, sudden call volumes without service degradation
- E. Features Required
- Unified dial plan
 - Voicemail, transcription, and analytics
 - Presence, call queues, IVR, paging, recording
 - Emergency services, SMS/MMS, verified business messaging
 - Device management (provisioning, updates, troubleshooting)
 - Site-based delegated administration (RBAC and audit logging)
- F. Compliance & Security
- Encryption (e.g., TLS, SRTP, AES-256)
 - MFA, RBAC, SAML integration
 - E911 compliance (location routing, RAY BAUM'S Act, Kari's Law)
 - Audit logs and incident response plans
 - SOC 2, ISO 27001 or equivalent certifications preferred

1.6 Response Requirements

Respondents are required to structure their submissions according to the guidelines below to ensure consistency, clarity, and alignment with the DOE's needs.

- A. Vendor Profile
- Company overview, years in business, size, relevant experience
 - Certifications (e.g., Microsoft Gold Partner, Zoom, Webex)
 - Client references (preferably public sector or education)
- B. Solution Architecture
- VoIP deployment model (cloud, hybrid, on-prem)
 - Supported hardware/software components
 - Integration with PSTN (SIP trunking, PRI, analog)
 - Protocols supported (SIP, RTP, RTCP, DNS, etc.)
- C. Feature Set
- Provide full list of:
- Calling and messaging features
 - Admin and user portals
 - Device management tools
 - Emergency call routing and notifications
 - Classroom voice solution compatibility (including CAT3/CAT5e)
 - Advanced messaging (SMS, MMS, WhatsApp, Apple Business Chat, etc.)
- D. Security & Compliance
- Review Appendix A: NYC DOE DIIT School Network Standards
 - Review Appendix B: NYC DOE Vendor Security Policy
 - Complete Appendix C: Vendor Response Template
 - Include documentation for certifications, compliance policies, and audit reports
- E. Implementation & Support
- Typical implementation timeline per site
 - Support resources, training, and documentation

- 24/7 support availability, escalation procedures
 - Support for Proof of Concept (POC) environments
 - Integration with NYC DOE's ServiceNow ticketing system (E-bonding preferred)
- F. Case Studies
- Relevant deployments in large education or government organizations
 - Highlight challenges, implementation strategies, and outcomes
- G. Cost Overview
- High-level pricing models (per user/device/license)
 - Optional services and pricing
 - Estimated cost savings vs legacy telephony

2. Instructions for Respondents

The New York City Department of Education (DOE) seeks information from qualified vendors capable of providing enterprise-grade Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) solutions. This includes, but is not limited to, cloud-based, on-premises, or hybrid implementations.

Entities responding to this Request for Expressions of Interest (RFEI), hereafter referred to as Respondents, may be any legally recognized entity, including individual firms, partnerships, joint ventures, or other legal organizations.

Procurement Platform Access

This RFEI is published via the NYC DCAS City Record Online <https://a856-cityrecord.nyc.gov/> and is publicly accessible through the Vendor Portal <https://www.finance360.org/vendor/vendorportal/>

3. Timeline

MILESTONE	DATE (TENTATIVE)
RFEI Release Date	Monday, November 17, 2025
Vendor Questions Due	Friday, November 21, 2025
DOE Response to Questions (Addendum Issued)	Tuesday, November 25, 2025 *Tentative*
RFEI Submission Deadline	Wednesday, December 3 rd , 2025 at 2:00 PM EST

Questions & Clarifications

All inquiries regarding this RFEI must be submitted via email to: dcptech@schools.nyc.gov

Subject Line: Questions for the VoIP RFEI from [Name of Firm]

Answers to all questions will be shared with all respondents via an Addendum posted in Vendor Portal by the date listed above.

Submissions Requirements

All Respondents must submit their completed responses by the deadline through email, details below:

- **Via Email: Send to dcptech@schools.nyc.gov**
Subject Line: Response to the VoIP RFEI from [Name of Firm]

Deadline: Wednesday, December 3rd, 2025 at 2:00 PM EST

4. Submission Requirements

To ensure consistency all Respondents are **required** to complete and submit the **Appendix C- Vendor Response Template**, which is provided as an attachment to this RFEI.

The completed Vendor Response Template should:

- Clearly indicate whether your solution meets each specified requirement using ✓ / ○ / ✗ responses.
- Include explanatory comments and references to documentation as applicable.
- Be submitted as a PDF (preferred) or in Excel format if using the spreadsheet version.

Vendor Submission Package Must Include:

1. **Completed Vendor Response Template (PDF or Excel format)**
2. **Any supplementary documentation referenced in the Template:**
 - a. Product architecture diagrams
 - b. Case studies or references
 - c. Security certifications
 - d. Costing model details
3. **Optional: Marketing brochures, white papers, or other materials**

Formatting Guidelines:

- Limit narrative content to 15 pages, excluding appendices.
- Number all pages.
- Include a table of contents.
- Use standard file formats: PDF, DOCX, XLSX, or PPTX.

5. Disclaimers and Additional Information

This RFEI is issued for information-gathering purposes only. It is not a solicitation for bids or proposals and does not obligate the NYC DOE to:

- Enter into negotiations or a contract
- Commence any procurement process
- Select or shortlist any Respondent

The DOE is not responsible for any costs incurred by Respondents in connection with preparing or submitting responses to this RFEI.

DOE Rights Reserved

The DOE reserves the right to:

- Modify, cancel, or reissue this RFEI at any time
- Amend or clarify any part of the RFEI
- Request supplemental information from any Respondent
- Extend submission deadlines
- Contact Respondents to correct or clarify submissions
- Request demonstrations, interviews, or presentations as part of the review process

Public Disclosure

Please be advised that responses to this RFEI are subject to the New York State Freedom of Information Law (FOIL), which governs the public disclosure of records (See: NY Public Officers Law §§ 87 and 89).