

RFP 23-73611 CLARIFICATIONS

INSTRUCTIONS

Please supply requested information in the blue-shaded areas and indicate any attachments that have been included. Where appropriate, supporting documentation may be referenced by specific page and/or paragraph number(s).

If any of this response contains confidential information, as defined by IC 5-14-3, provide a separate redacted (for public release) version of this document. Specify which statutory exception of APRA applies and provide a description explaining the manner in which the statutory exception to the APRA applies.

RESPONDENT NAME: POWERSCHOOL

The State requests response(s) to the below question(s) by **April 17, 3:00 PM ET**.

ATTACHMENT	CLARIFICATION QUESTION	RESPONDENT RESPONSE
<u>Attachment F –</u> Technical Proposal – System Infrastructure and Functionality	Are all languages available or will IDOE be required to designate which languages are available in the system? If all languages are not available, is there an additional cost to add languages? Please detail the document types that will be able to be translated in your system. What quality control measures are in place to ensure translation accuracy with the State’s standard document templates?	<p>The PowerSchool Special Programs platform includes an integrated translation tool powered by Google Translate. Any language available in Google Translate is also available in Special Programs. Using the tool, any document template, for any module (e.g., Special Ed, ELL) can be translated by IDOE staff with the appropriate security access.</p> <p>Each template requires a one-time translation effort. Once the process is complete the translated template is accessible to end users. Text entered in the template by end users (e.g., goals and objectives, present levels, etc.) can also be translated.</p> <p>Our platform includes a proofreading process for translation accuracy. The embedded workflow enables machine translation (powered by Google) as the first pass, and the next step (i.e., proofreading) assumes that a native speaker reviews the translated text and can then accept the translation as is or edit it for dialect accuracy.</p> <p>Our integrated language translation tool is included with the platform at no additional cost.</p>

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<u>Attachment F – Technical Proposal</u> – System Infrastructure and Functionality	Please provide your core product road map including expected system upgrades.	<p>The PowerSchool Special Programs platform is based on agile software development processes with an adaptable roadmap based on customer feedback, market developments, and technology evolution.</p> <p>We constantly review our plans and consider them directional. Some planned roadmap items include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Education Agency functionality enhancements • Enable Connected Intelligence functionality for enhanced data aggregation • MTSS integration <p>Follow-up releases/enhancements for the following existing features and functionality:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy Edit tool • Workflow Case Management • Digital Signature <p>State model updates are a continuous part of our roadmap development including support for compliance and customer ease of use.</p> <p>PowerSchool also continuously grows our portfolio through acquisitions and partnerships.</p>
<u>Attachment F – Technical Proposal</u> – System Infrastructure and Functionality	Can you provide a comprehensive list of guided actions that your system uses to direct users?	<p>The guided actions in the PowerSchool Special Programs platform are configurable. During the business process review and requirements gathering phase of the project, we will work with IDOE to document desired guided actions that will support accuracy, compliance, and ease of use workflows for end users.</p>

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<u>Attachment F – Technical Proposal</u> – System Infrastructure and Functionality	Can you provide visual snapshots for reporting of accommodations system features?	The PowerSchool Special Programs platform supports reporting snapshot functionality (i.e., a moment in time) that can be used for purposes of reporting on accommodation data. Our reporting tool also supports charts and graphs for multi-dimensional reports.
<u>Attachment F – Technical Proposal</u> – System Infrastructure and Functionality	Your proposal on page 44 notes that customer permission is needed to access environments. Please define “customer permissions” and “access environments” and who is included as a “customer”. In cases of troubleshooting, can you please describe how this process works? What is the expected response time?	<p>During the implementation of the PowerSchool Special Programs platform process, the customer (LEA / State) will define Technical Contact(s) who will be authorized to contact PowerSchool Application Support and receive support.</p> <p>PowerSchool will only access customer (LEA / State) data within the PowerSchool Special Programs platform when requested to do so by the authorized Technical Contact(s) to troubleshoot a support issue. The Technical Contact(s) authorization to access customer (LEA / State) data is captured within PowerSchool ticketing systems and provides visibility to the authorized Technical Contact(s) for activity related to the support service request. The expected response time to contact a PowerSchool Application Support Engineer is less than 10 minutes by phone, with 80% of calls answered within 60 seconds.</p>
<u>Attachment F – Technical Proposal</u> – System Infrastructure and Functionality	Please describe your proposed solution’s document collaboration features and capabilities, including multiple users accessing the same document simultaneously.	<p>The PowerSchool Special Programs platform supports multiple ways for staff to collaborate on specific documents. Communication and collaboration tools are built into workflows throughout the platform. A few examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to send a message directly from any document • Ability to send a message directly from a specific “section” of a document (e.g., this allows multiple staff to collaborate on the content of goals, objectives, present levels, etc.) • Ability to set up automated reminders as part of the workflow case management process which will notify staff

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		<p>when specific steps and/or timelines are completed or missed (e.g., consent for evaluation has been obtained)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft vs Review vs Final document status workflow that allows draft documents to be submitted in review status which supports team review and collaboration prior to the document finalization process <p>Multiple users can access the same document simultaneously, but the section a user is working on will be locked while it is being edited to prevent overwriting. For example, one user could be working on the Programs/Services section of the IEP while another user is working on the Present Levels section. One exception to the above description is our Goal/Objective section. The platform has been designed to enable multiple users to enter goals simultaneously. For example, one user may be drafting a speech goal, and another user can draft a math goal at the same time.</p>
<p><u>Attachment F – Technical Proposal</u> – System Infrastructure and Functionality</p>	<p>Your proposal notes on page 14 that “Once a document template is translated and the content approved, the only content that needs to be translated and approved in the future is that which is entered into open text fields – such as goals and objectives in an IEP or ILP.” Please describe what exactly is translated once an original IEP or ILP goes through the translation process.</p>	<p>As described above, the first step is the one-time translation of each document template (note: all document templates can be translated).</p> <p>Assuming that step has been completed, the next step is for the user to complete an IEP/ILP (or any other document) in the English version of the form. Once the document has been completed and the status has been changed to Review or Final, the user (assuming security privileges have been enabled) can select which language he/she wants the document translated to. Machine translation via Google Translate takes place. This initiates the proofreading process. Via the proofreading workflow, a native speaker reviews the translated text and can accept the translation as is or edit it for dialect accuracy. Once the proofreading process has been completed on all sections of the document (e.g., an IEP or ILP) the translated document can be finalized and will reside next to the English version in the student’s document library.</p>

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<u>Attachment F – Technical Proposal</u> – System Infrastructure and Functionality	Your proposal notes on page 17 that “Within the workflow process, you can align a variety of steps and metrics that include timelines and countdown days.” Please define a countdown day.	Countdown days in the PowerSchool Special Programs platform are configurable and can be defined by the IDOE.
<u>Attachment F – Technical Proposal</u> – System Infrastructure and Functionality	Your proposal notes that your solution’s workflow can be used in both IEP/ILP situations and you describe term-limited (e.g., 7 years) access to student files based on the file start date. Understanding the State needs to be able to access the complete student record at any time, please describe how an IEP or ILP file date is established. Does your solution allow for accessing the historical student record regardless of the established file date?	<p>The data migration includes migrating seven years’ worth of data and is based on a school year (e.g., if IDOE deploys Special Programs for the 24/25 school year we will migrate all documents beginning with the 18/19 school year).</p> <p>The PowerSchool Special Programs platform solution includes the ability to retain and archive historical information electronically. Each student record includes an electronic "file" cabinet also referred to as a document library. Within the document library, authorized users have access to current and historical documents organized by school year and document type.</p> <p>Additionally, PowerSchool Special Programs has a student profile archiving feature that can be enabled by the LEA system administrator to enable students (including student profiles, documents, events, etc.) to be moved into a long-term archive rather than being purged. Students in the archive can be accessed at any time from the regular user interface with all documents being immediately available in PDF format.</p>
<u>Attachment F – Technical Proposal</u> – System Infrastructure and Functionality	Your proposal notes on page 22 that “Lastly, security permissions within PowerSchool Special Programs will delineate who can do what within the solution. This includes the ability to delete documents.” Please describe these security permission levels and which individuals will have access to which level?	<p>Security in the PowerSchool Special Programs platform is applied to groups of users. Examples of groups may be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case Managers • Related Service Providers • Directors / Supervisors • System Administrators, etc.

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		<p>There is no limit to the number of groups that can be created.</p> <p>Security permissions are assigned to each group and can be defined by the IDOE. For example, Case Managers may be able to create and edit a document, but Supervisors may only be able to view documents. System Administrators may be able to delete documents, but other user groups cannot.</p> <p>Groups and their associated security permissions will be defined during the business process review and requirements-gathering phase of the project. The creation of the groups and assignment of security permissions will occur during the implementation phase of the project.</p>
<u>Attachment F – Technical Proposal</u> – System Infrastructure and Functionality	Your proposal notes on page 31, “Our document upload feature allows LEAs to apply security access to uploaded documents to ensure that confidential information is only available to those staff that requires access.” Are there limits on how many State staff can be designated security access?	In the PowerSchool Special Programs platform any user can be provided with security permissions to upload documents and/or view uploaded documents, there are no limits to the number of staff that can be granted this access.
<u>Attachment F – Technical Proposal</u> – System Infrastructure and Functionality	The State’s intention is to maintain a document repository that serves multiple applications. With that in mind, would you work with a Content Services Platform to help manage unstructured data? Are you able or willing to integrate with the pending CSP solution? Or is unstructured data storage staying in SQL as described in your response the only option?	Our response proposes our Data Connectivity Tool (DCT) tool for the automated importing or exporting of structured data, which can occur across a variety of data source types and provides rich data mapping, translation, record-matching, and data-transfer scheduling capabilities. Supported data source connections include Secure FTP connections to accommodate ASCII files and MS Excel files as well as direct database connections including MS SQL, Oracle, and ODBC Data Source connections. Unstructured data in this model is stored in the backend SQL. While not part of our proposed solution, the PowerSchool portfolio includes a Connected Intelligence offering that securely stores unstructured data with built-in data governance and we would welcome the opportunity to discuss this with the state to better understand their integration needs for the pending Content Services Platform.

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<u>Attachment F – Technical Proposal</u> – System Infrastructure and Functionality	For archival purposes, when a student transfers from one district to another how much time is allowed in the system before it auto-initiates an inactive student coding on the file? Please describe your process including audit protocols to ensure accuracy and no interruption in student record access. How can integrations better support schools to make interdistrict student transfers a seamless experience?	<p>Currently, the PowerSchool Special Programs platform student data transfer process does not automatically inactive a student from the sending district’s database. The inactivation process is completed manually by the sending district. If the state prefers inactivation to be an automated process, once the receiving school has accepted the student(s) records, a script could be created to automate the process of inactivation.</p> <p>No integration is required as part of our student data transfer process. It is a secure, immediate transfer of data from one district database to another which ensures there will be no interruption in student record access.</p>
<u>Attachment F – Technical Proposal</u> – System Infrastructure and Functionality	What additional and/or add-on services are available for school districts to purchase beyond the IEP/ILP services listed in your proposal?	<p>PowerSchool recommends three additional modules as add-ons that can be purchased by the state or individual districts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 504 module – to manage documentation and reporting that supports 504 accommodations including eligibility, consent, letters and notices, and the 504 Plan • Gifted and Talented module – to manage documentation and reporting that supports Indiana’s high-ability students including eligibility, consent, letters and notices, and the Gifted Plan • Stepwell – a compliance and monitoring platform that integrates with our Special Program data. <p>IDOE and districts can also purchase additional services such as custom consulting tailored to the individual needs of LEAs, Keys to Ownership (KTO) training that is product agnostic, additional training, and adoption packages among other services. We understand that LEAs may require additional support beyond deployment, which is why we provide information on how to request these services during the implementation phase. This ensures districts are aware of how to purchase additional services and can receive the necessary support to maximize their experience with PowerSchool solutions.</p>

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<u>Attachment F – Technical Proposal</u> – Project Management and Staffing	What is the timeframe for issue escalation from when a ticket is submitted to becoming a Tier 3 ticket? Please provide a timeframe for each escalation point and describe how it maps to the information you provide in pages 117 - 120 of your response.	<p>Escalation of an issue to the next level depends on a variety of factors, including the type of issue, issue severity, details available to triage, and the overall impact of the issue for the School or the District.</p> <p>Tier 1 support team members put in their best effort to understand the customers' questions and working with the customer contact, gather all the required details needed to triage. Once all details are available, the support team members address the issue at hand, to the best of their ability, based on their product knowledge and available documentation. If they are not able to resolve the issue, they escalate to Tier 2.</p> <p>Tier 2 supports team members in receiving the issue, reviewing the gathered details, triage already performed, and other available details, to further triage the issue. If additional information is needed, Tier 2 team members reach out to the customer contact to request that. If available details are enough to triage the issue, Tier 2 team members triage the issue and provide an update to the customers. If they are not able to resolve the issue, they escalate to Tier 3 for assistance.</p> <p>If any code level changes are required, the Tier2 support team collaborates with our product teams as well to develop the resolution path. Any code level changes then go through standard (SDLC) software development lifecycle process as part of our quality control process</p>
<u>Attachment F – Technical Proposal</u> – Project Management and Staffing	When does your implementation support end and does the responsibility of system support transfer to IDOE? Once this transfer occurs, will any support be provided by PowerSchool? If so, at what level?	Based on PowerSchool’s experience with other statewide implementations, the recommendation for our Organizational Change Management (OCM) resource is to support IDOE for 27 months (about 2 and a half years). The support of our OCM resource is estimated to begin 12 months from the start of the project at which time the planning, roll-out, and adoption phase of the project will commence. If additional support is required beyond 27

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		<p>months, the resource will be available at an hourly rate. After the utilization of the OCM resource, IDOE will transition to the PowerSchool Support model as outlined in our proposal.</p> <p>We are committed to ensuring a seamless transition as part of our partnership. In addition to our OCM resource, we will provide districts with an option to access on-demand live assistance from our team of experts in the first several weeks after the go-live date. Our live meetings are facilitated and districts and INDOE contacts are connected directly with a PowerSchool Subject Matter Expert to receive personalized 1:1 assistance. We are dedicated to answering questions and providing guidance to ensure that any issues that may arise during the early adoption phase are addressed promptly and efficiently.</p>
<u>Attachment F – Technical Proposal</u> – Project Management and Staffing	Is chat and video conferencing solely reserved for Tier 3 customer support?	Chat Support is available as one of the primary channels to reach the Support team, especially to engage our Tier 1 Support team for timely assistance. Additionally, Support specialists at any level, based on the issue, and as needed may request that the customer engages in a video session, virtual meeting, or Bomgar session to live-triage the issue or to jointly work together and gather additional details that would assist in resolving the issue.
Attachment F – Technical Proposal – Data Migration, Integration, and Testing	What is the level of formality involved in the UAT process? Are test cases used to quantify requirements and validate during the UAT process? Will the State have the opportunity to test the proposed solution prior to implementation to ensure it meets the State’s needs and user functionality expectations?	<p>The level of formality involved in the UAT process will depend on the complexity of the project and the requirements outlined in the RFP. Generally, UAT involves a formal process where end-users or representatives from the State test the proposed solution to ensure it meets their needs and functionality expectations. This process involves the use of formal test scripts and test cases, as well as documentation and reporting of any issues or defects that are identified. If defects are identified during the testing process, PowerSchool will work to remediate them during the time designated in the project plan.</p> <p>Test cases are often used during the UAT process to quantify requirements and validate that the proposed solution meets the State's needs and functionality expectations. As part of our UAT</p>

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		<p>process, PowerSchool will provide test case scripts to the State to ensure that each requirement outlined in the RFP is thoroughly tested and validated by the end users or State representatives. These scripts will help to ensure that the testing process is consistent and repeatable across all test scenarios.</p> <p>PowerSchool will guide the State through two phases of testing. The first phase of testing is field-level testing at the component level: PowerSchool will guide the State through testing of specific components (e.g., the referral process) including documents, dataflows, and applicable reports. The second phase of testing is scenario or process-based and will be completed by multiple State users during our End-to-End testing. This comprehensive testing approach allows the State to thoroughly test the solution prior to implementation, ensuring that it meets the State's needs and user functionality expectations.</p>
<u>Attachment F – Technical Proposal</u> – Data Migration, Integration, and Testing	Is it your intention to migrate data in a phased approach or all at once?	Based on our experience with other statewide implementations, PowerSchool recommends a phased-in approach to data migration. In our experience, a phased approach supports a more effective process for communication and execution with LEAs. The detailed plan for data migration will be finalized during the planning phase of the project.
<u>Attachment F – Technical Proposal</u> – Data Migration, Integration, and Testing	In your response you describe a School-level Data Conversion Specialist with office hours and webinars. Please describe your expectations for this role and how it will support individual schools and the State more broadly.	PowerSchool’s experience in statewide implementations has indicated that after the initial data migration LEAs commonly have questions and/or prefer to review their data for accuracy with a specialist. The role of the Data Conversation Specialist is to support LEAs by providing scheduled sessions that are intended to troubleshoot/review migrated data. Sessions are typically well attended and provide structured support for LEAs. An additional purpose of the sessions is to attain sign-off for Go-Live readiness which supports the state by ensuring all Districts are adequately prepared for deployment.

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<u>Attachment F – Technical Proposal</u> – Data Migration, Integration, and Testing	Please provide additional detail on your automated testing tools. Will there be any regression testing conducted using these tools during the M&O period?	Tools utilized for automated testing include Selenide (Java-based TestNG framework) and WebdriverIO (Javascript-based Mocha framework). We perform rigorous regression testing before each release and have nightly automation testing to identify any issues introduced during development. This process is supported throughout the M&O period.
<u>Attachment F – Technical Proposal</u> – Data Migration, Integration, and Testing	In your response, you describe LEAs using Fairbanks. Please provide any Indiana-specific experience where LEAs have used Fairbanks.	While Fairbanks does not currently work with any LEAs in Indiana, the firm has implemented MAC claiming systems across the country and has successfully designed, implemented, managed, and evaluated Medicaid claiming programs for over 8,000 LEAs serving almost 13 million students in 12 states. Fairbanks works with large urban districts, small rural districts, and suburban districts of all sizes and has a firm grasp and understanding of how to manage and support a successful MAC program for the State of Indiana. Fairbanks has experience contracting with individual school districts (as is envisioned in this RFP) and understands the procurement process required for each school district to enter an engagement for MAC services.
<u>Attachment F – Technical Proposal</u> – Implementation & New Releases	Please clarify what you mean by “change request.” How does that process occur? What is the timeline for that process? Who initiates the change request process?	<p>The Change Management plan establishes an orderly and effective documented procedure for tracking the submission, coordination, review, evaluation, categorization, and approval for the release of all changes to the project’s SOW. The Change Management request’s intended audience is the project manager, project team, project sponsor, and any senior leaders whose support is needed to carry out the plan. Issues and project change requests are typically unexpected and often must be dealt with quickly, to ensure the health of the project. A change request form will be used when issues/changes present themselves during the project lifecycle.</p> <p>A planned action will be available no less than 24 hours once a change request has been submitted during normal business hours.</p>

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<u>Attachment F – Technical Proposal</u> – Implementation & New Releases	In your response to question 5b.1, you discuss a phased rollout as part of your implementation strategy. Does this phased rollout take place before, during, or after the proposed two year implementation timeline?	PowerSchool is committed to completing the phased rollout within the two-year implementation timeline.
<u>Attachment F – Technical Proposal</u> – Training, and User Roles	In your response you describe front-end training. Please provide detail regarding your training plan and processes, including what proportion of your training is in-person and virtual?	<p>Training on PowerSchool Special Programs is generally separated into three user groups.</p> <p>Group 1: State Administration team – All training for this group is completed virtually through live Zoom sessions. In year one, participants in this group will be provided with a training track that covers 9 hours of system administration, 6 hours of report writing, and 6 hours of end-user training. The end-user training is customized to include 3 breakout sessions users select based on the module (SPED, EL, etc.) they are associated with. In these breakout sessions, functionality training is the same, but the document completion processes are demonstrated with module-specific documents (e.g., IEP vs ILP). To account for refresher training and staffing changes, an additional one-time per year refresher course is offered as well as quarterly new user sessions for years 1-4. The training plan provides seats for 25 participants from the State Administration team.</p> <p>Group 2: District Users, Module Administrators, Technical Staff – Training for this group is a mix of virtual live Zoom sessions and asynchronous videos. The agendas and content include the same information presented to the state team but through a blended approach utilizing the Schoology platform. The cohort will work through 7 modules covering system administration, report writing, and end-user training. The blended model is designed to span over time (2-6 months) so that participants can learn at their own pace, develop a network for support with other districts, and have scaffolded instruction with additional reference materials and</p>

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		<p>recorded content. The training plan provides enough seats for 48 cohorts, which reflects 4 representatives from each of the 291 districts. To account for refreshers and staffing changes within this group, an additional 1 time per year refresher course is offered as well as a quarterly new user session for years 1-4 which will all be delivered virtually through a live Zoom session.</p> <p>Group 3: School Users - Training for this group is a mix of virtual live Zoom sessions and asynchronous videos. The agendas and content covered include the learning path for end users which eliminates the need for system administration and report-writing training. All training follows a train-the-trainer approach through a blended model utilizing the Schoology platform. Each cohort will work through 2 modules covering the navigation of the platform and document completion specific to the module the end user's role is associated with (SPED, EL, etc.). The blended model is designed to give users a deeper understanding of how the platform works by providing opportunities for participants to learn at their own pace, network for support with other districts, and have scaffolded instruction with additional reference materials and recorded content. The additional time and resources allow for a smoother transition when these individuals return to their districts to train their teams. The training plan provides enough seats for 24 cohorts, which reflects 2 representatives from each of the 291 districts. To account for refreshers and staffing changes within this group, all participants will be able to access their Schoology Course, with recorded sessions and materials at any time for refreshers and new users.</p>
<p><u>Attachment F – Technical Proposal</u> –Training, and User Roles</p>	<p>To what extent are your training materials pre-packaged vs. custom-built for the State?</p>	<p>All PowerSchool Special Programs training materials are created and mapped to the state-specific site.</p> <p>User-specific agendas (State Admin Team, Module/District Users, School/End Users) are created based on the functionality of the platform. After the code freeze takes place for the build of the state model, the Customer Education team works to map the curriculum associated with the agendas to the state instance. All images and</p>

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		instructions reflect the specific state instance. Examples used during training also reflect state-specific data fields and workflows.
<u>Attachment F – Technical Proposal</u> –Training, and User Roles	How does the proposed training timeline correspond with the phased rollout approach described in your response?	PowerSchool’s phased rollout approach for training systematically ensures that knowledge of the platform is provided to each user group as needed. The flexibility of targeting user groups allows us to train staff simultaneously, or over time which grants the opportunity to customize the timeline to meet whatever needs are identified by the jointly by IDOE and PowerSchool. Because of utilizing a mix of synchronous and blended training approaches, multiple timelines can be established so that we are meeting the needs of each user group and the constraints they may face with scheduling. In our timeline, training can be deployed as early as 30 days after code freeze during the development and deployment process of the solution.
<u>Attachment F – Technical Proposal</u> –Security, Backup, and Recovery	In your response on page 125, you describe that your solution’s “...firewall configurations are globally deployed and shared amongst all PowerSchool Special Programs customers.” Please detail how you ensure the security of State data. Is there any co-mingling of data between customers with your proposed solution?	The PowerSchool Software as a Service (SaaS) environment utilizes a centrally managed Application Gateway for incoming web traffic amongst all PowerSchool Special Programs customers. The centrally managed Application Gateway contains Intrusion Detection Systems (IDS) and Intrusion Prevention Systems (IPS) as well as an extensive set of security groups to filter and forward legitimate network traffic and block unauthorized intrusion attempts. Within the backend, Microsoft SQL Server configuration, each customer (LEA) would have their own dedicated database to ensure their data is completely isolated from other customers. Additionally, each customer also uses their own authentication scenario to control access to their data.