

PURCHASING

The Board of Education views purchasing as serving the educational program by providing necessary supplies, equipment and related services. Purchasing will be centralized in the business office under the authority of the Purchasing Agent designated by the Board.

It is the goal of the Board to purchase competitively, without prejudice or favoritism, and to seek the maximum educational value for every dollar expended. Competitive bids or quotations shall be solicited in connection with purchases pursuant to law. The General Municipal Law requires that purchase contracts for materials, equipment and supplies involving an estimated annual expenditure exceeding \$20,000 and public work contracts involving an expenditure of more than \$35,000 will be awarded only after responsible bids have been received in response to a public advertisement soliciting formal bids. Similar procurements to be made in a fiscal year will be grouped together for the purpose of determining whether a particular item must be bid.

In accordance with law, the district shall give a preference in the purchase of instructional materials to vendors who agree to provide materials in alternative formats. The term "alternative format" shall mean any medium or format for the presentation of instructional materials, other than a traditional print textbook, that is needed as an accommodation for a disabled student enrolled in the district (or program of a BOCES), including but not limited to Braille, large print, open and closed captioned, audio, or an electronic file in a format compatible with alternative format conversion software that is appropriate to meet the needs of the individual student.

Goods and services which are not required by law to be procured by the district through competitive bidding will be procured in a manner so as to ensure the prudent and economical use of public monies, in the best interests of the taxpayers, to facilitate the acquisition of goods and services of maximum quality at the lowest possible cost under the circumstances, and to guard against favoritism, improvidence, extravagance, fraud and corruption.

Alternative proposals or quotations will be secured by requests for proposals, written or verbal quotations or any other appropriate method of procurement, except for procurements:

1. under a county contract;
2. under a state contract;
3. of articles manufactured in state correctional institutions; or
4. from agencies for the blind and severely disabled.

The district's purchasing activity will strive to meet the following objectives:

1. to effectively supply all administrative units in the school system with needed materials, supplies, and contracted services;
2. to obtain materials, supplies and contracted services at the lowest prices possible consistent with the quality and standards needed as determined by the Purchasing Agent in cooperation with the requisitioning authority. The educational welfare of the students is the foremost consideration in making any purchase;
3. to ensure that all purchases fall within the framework of budgetary limitations and that they are consistent with the educational goals and programs of the district;
4. to maintain an appropriate and comprehensive accounting and reporting system to record and document all purchasing transactions; and
5. to ensure, through the use of proper internal controls, that loss and/or diversion of district property is prevented.

Opportunities shall be provided to all responsible suppliers to do business with the school district. Suppliers whose place of business is situated within the district may be given preferential consideration only when bids or quotations on an item or service are identical as to price, quality and other factors. Purchases will be made through available state contracts of the Office of General Services, county contracts, or agreements entered into by school districts for joint purchasing whenever such purchases are in the best interests of the district. In addition, the district will make purchases from correctional institutions and severely disabled persons through charitable or non-profit-making agencies, as provided by law.

The district will provide justification and documentation of any contract awarded to an offer or other than the lowest responsible dollar offer or, setting forth the reasons why such award is in the best interests of the district and otherwise furthers the purposes of section 104-b of the General Municipal Law.

The Purchasing Agent will not be required to secure alternative proposals or quotations for:

1. emergencies where time is a crucial factor;
2. procurements for which there is no possibility of competition (sole source items); or
3. very small procurements when solicitations of competition would not be cost-effective.

The Board authorizes the Superintendent of Schools, with the assistance of the Purchasing Agent and the Treasurer, to establish and maintain an internal control structure to ensure, to the best of their ability, that the district's assets will be safeguarded against loss from unauthorized use or disposition, that transactions will be executed in accordance with the law and district policies and regulations, and recorded properly in the financial records of the district.

The Purchasing Agent shall be responsible for the establishment and implementation of the procedures and standard forms for use in all purchasing and related activities in the district. Such procedures shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations of the state and the Commissioner of Education.

No Board member, officer or employee of the school district shall have an interest in any contract entered into by the Board or the district, as provided in Article 18 of the General Municipal Law.

The Purchasing Agent shall meet with the Board annually to review the district's procurement procedures including this purchasing policy and regulation.

The unintentional failure to fully comply with the provisions of section 104-b of the General Municipal Law or the district's policies regarding procurement will not be grounds to void action taken nor give rise to a cause of action against the district or any officer or employee of the district.

Ref: Education Law §§305(14); 1604(29-a); 1709(4-a)(9)(14)(22); 2503(7-a); 2554(7-a)
General Municipal Law §§102; 103; 104-b; 109-a; 800 et seq.

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PURCHASING REGULATION

The following sets forth the procedures for the procurement of goods and services by the district:

I. Definitions

Purchase Contract: a contract involving the acquisition of commodities, materials, supplies or equipment

Public Work Contract: a contract involving services, labor or construction

II. General Municipal Law

The General Municipal Law requires that purchase contracts for materials, equipment and supplies involving an estimated annual expenditure exceeding \$20,000 and public work contracts involving an expenditure of more than \$35,000 will be awarded only after responsible bids have been received in response to a public advertisement soliciting formal bids. Similar procurements to be made in a fiscal year will be grouped together for the purpose of determining whether a particular item must be bid.

III. Competitive Bidding Required

A. Method of Determining Whether Procurement is Subject to Competitive Bidding

- 1) The district will first determine if the proposed procurement is a purchase contract or a contract for public work.
- 2) If the procurement is either a purchase contract or a contract for public work, the district will then determine whether the amount of the annual procurement is above the applicable monetary threshold as set forth above.
- 3) The district will also determine whether any exceptions to the competitive bidding requirements (as set forth below) exist.

B. Contract Combining Professional Services and Purchase

In the event that a contract combines the provision of professional services and a purchase, the district, in determining the appropriate monetary threshold criteria to apply to the contract, will determine whether the professional service or the purchase is the predominant part of the transaction.

C. Opening and Recording Bids; Awarding Contracts

The Purchasing Agent will be authorized to open and record bids. Contracts will be awarded by the Board of Education to the lowest responsible bidder (as recommended by the Purchasing Agent), who has furnished the required security after responding to an advertisement for sealed bids.

D. Documentation of Competitive Bids

1. The district will maintain proper written documentation which will set forth the method in which it determined whether the procurement is a purchase or a public work contract.
- 2) Proper written documentation will also be required when a contract is not awarded to the vendor submitting the lowest quote, setting forth the reasons therefore. That vendor may be given an opportunity to defend his product and/or reputation before the Board of Education.
- 3) A quote which exceeds the bid limit will be awarded only when such award is in the best interests of the district and otherwise furthers the purposes of section 104-b of the General Municipal Law. The district will provide justification and documentation of any such contract awarded.

E. Purchase of Instructional Materials

In accordance with Education Law the district shall give a preference in the purchase of instructional materials to vendors who agree to provide materials in alternative formats (i.e., any medium or format for the presentation of instructional materials, other than a traditional print textbook, that is needed as a accommodation for a disabled student enrolled in the district, including but not limited to Braille, large print, open and closed captioned, audio or an electronic file in an approved format.)

The district will establish and follow a plan to ensure that every student with a disability who needs his or her instructional materials in an alternative format will receive those materials at the same time that they are available to non-disabled students.

F. Leases of Personal Property

In addition to the above-mentioned competitive bidding requirements, section 1725 of the Education Law requires that the district will be subject to competitive bidding requirements for purchase contracts when it enters into a lease of personal property.

Documentation: The district will maintain written documentation such as quotes, cost-benefit analysis of leasing versus purchasing, etc.

Any legal issues regarding the applicability of competitive bidding requirements will be presented to the school attorney for review.

IV. Exceptions to Competitive Bidding Requirements

The district will not be subject to competitive bidding requirements when the Board of Education, in its discretion, determines that one of the following situations exists:

- A. emergency situations where:
- 1) the situation arises out of an accident or unforeseen occurrence or condition;
 - 2) a district building, property, or the life, health, or safety of an individual on district property is affected; or
 - 3) the situation requires immediate action which cannot await competitive bidding.

However, when the Board passes a resolution that an emergency situation exists, the district will make purchases at the lowest possible costs, seeking competition by informal solicitation of quotes or otherwise, to the extent practicable under the circumstances.

Documentation: The district will maintain records of verbal (or written) quotes;

- B. When the district purchases surplus or second-hand supplies, materials or equipment from the federal or state governments or from any other political subdivision or public benefit corporation within the state.

Documentation: The district will maintain market price comparisons (verbal or written quotes) and the name of the government entity;

- C. When the Board separately purchases eggs, livestock, fish and dairy products (other than milk), juice, grains and species of fresh fruits and vegetables directly from producers or growers. The amount expended in any fiscal year by the district may not exceed an amount equal to fifteen cents multiplied by the number of days in the school year multiplied by the total enrollment of the district.

Documentation: The district will maintain documentation consistent with sections 114.3 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education;

- D. When the Board separately purchases milk directly from licensed milk processors employing less than forty (40) people. The amount expended in any fiscal year by the district may not exceed an amount equal to twenty-five cents multiplied by the number of days in the school year multiplied by the total enrollment of the district or exceed the current market price.

Documentation: The district will maintain documentation consistent with section 114.4 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education; or

- E. When there is only one possible source from which to procure goods or services required in the public interest.

Documentation: The district will maintain written documentation of the unique benefits of the item or service purchased as compared to other items or services available in the marketplace; that no other item or service provides substantially equivalent or similar benefits; and that, considering the benefits received, the cost of the item or service is reasonable, when compared to conventional methods. In addition, the documentation will provide that there is no possibility of competition for the procurement of the goods.

- F. When contracts for professional services require special skills or training, this includes, but is not limited to: Legal Services, Property Appraisals, Engineering Services, Claims Management, Auditing Services, Medical Services, Architectural Services, Investment Management, Pharmaceutical Services and Insurance Coverage.

V. *Standardization*

Upon the adoption of a resolution by a vote of 3/5ths of the Board stating that, for reasons of efficiency or economy, there is a need for standardization, purchase contracts for a particular type or kind of equipment, material or supplies of more than \$10,000 may be awarded to the lowest responsible bidder furnishing the required security after advertisement for sealed bids. The resolution must contain a full explanation of the reasons for its adoption.

VI. *Quotes When Competitive Bidding Not Required*

Goods and services which are not required by law to be procured by the district through competitive bidding will be procured in a manner so as to ensure the prudent and economical use of public monies in the best interests of the taxpayers. Alternative proposals or quotations will be secured by requests for proposals, written or verbal quotations or any other appropriate method of procurement, as set forth below.

In the event that only a limited number of vendors are available for a specific purchase or public work, the purchasing agent shall write a memo to the claims auditor explaining the process to obtain quotes and/or the specific reasons why the required number of quotes was not obtained.

A. Methods of Documentation

- 1) Verbal Quotations: the telephone log or other record will set forth, at a minimum, the date, item or service desired, price quoted, name of vendor, name of vendor's representative;
- 2) Written Quotations: vendors will provide, at a minimum, the date, description of the item or details of service to be provided, price quoted, name of contact. The district will maintain documentation consistent with Exhibit E.1 that will include advertisements, specifications and the awarding resolution. Alternatively, written or verbal quotation forms will serve as documentation, if formal bidding is not required;
- 3) Requests for Proposals: the district will contact a number of professionals (e.g., architects, engineers, accountants, lawyers, underwriters, fiscal consultants, etc.) and request that they submit written proposals. The RFPs may include negotiations on a fair and equal basis. The RFPs and evaluation of such proposals will consider price plus other factors such as:
 - a) the special knowledge or expertise of the professional or consultant service;
 - b) the quality of the service to be provided;
 - c) the staffing of the service; and
 - d) the suitability for the district's needs.

The district will first locate prospective qualified firms by:

- a) advertising in trade journals;
- b) checking listings of professionals; or
- c) making inquiries of other districts or other appropriate sources.

The district will then prepare a well-planned RFP which will contain critical details of the engagement, including the methods which it will use in selecting the service.

B. Purchases/Public Work Methods of Competition to be Used for Non-Bid Procurements; Documentation to be Maintained

The district will require the following methods of competition be used and sources of documentation maintained when soliciting non-bid procurements in the most cost-effective manner possible:

- 1) Purchase Contracts up to \$20,000
 - a. Contracts under \$1,000: No quotation required;
 - b. Contracts from \$1,000 to \$3,000:
Verbal quotes Documentation will include notations of verbal quotes.
 - c. Contracts in excess of \$3,000 to \$20,000: Written quotes
- 2) Public Work Contracts up to \$35,000
 - a. Contracts from \$5,000 to \$10,000:
Verbal quotes – Documentation will include notations of verbal quotes.
 - b. Contracts in excess of \$10,000 to \$35,000:
Written quotes
- 3) Emergencies: Verbal quotes
Documentation will include notations of verbal quotes.
- 4) Insurance: Procured in a manner so as to assure the prudent and economical use of public money.
- 5) Professional Services: RFP
Documentation will include written proposals.
- 6) Second Hand Equipment from Other Governments: Written quotes
Documentation will include market price comparisons (verbal or written quotes) and the name of the government.
- 7) Certain Food and Milk Purchases: Written quotes
Documentation will be consistent with sections 114.3 and 114.4 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education.
- 8) Sole Source: Written or verbal quotes
Documentation will include, among other things, the unique benefits of the patented item as compared to other items available in the marketplace; that no other item provides substantially equivalent or similar benefits; and that considering the benefits received, the cost of the item is reasonable, when compared to conventional methods.

Notations of verbal quotes will be maintained by the district. In addition, the district will document that there is no possibility of competition for the procurement of the goods.

VII. Quotes Not Required When Competitive Bidding Not Required

The district will not be required to secure alternative proposals or quotations for those procurements:

1. under any county contract;
2. under a state contract;
3. of articles manufactured in state correctional institutions; or
4. from agencies for the blind and severely disabled.

In addition, the district will not be required to secure such alternative proposals or quotations for:

1. emergencies where time is a crucial factor;
2. procurements for which there is no possibility of competition (sole source items);
3. procurements of professional services, which, because of the confidential nature of the services, do not lend themselves to procurement through solicitation; or
4. very small procurements when solicitations of competition would not be cost-effective.

VIII. Procurements from Other than the Lowest Responsible Dollar Offer or

The district will provide justification and documentation of any contract awarded to an offer or other than the lowest responsible dollar offer or, setting forth the reasons why such award is in the best interests of the district and otherwise furthers the purposes of section 104-b of the General Municipal Law.

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6700-E.1 PURCHASING EXHIBIT - Methods of Competition to be
Used for Non-Bid Procurement

	Verbal Quotes		Written Quotes		RFP upon Consideration of change
	0-3	Min. of 2	Min. of 3	3+	
Purchase Contracts up to \$20,000					
Under \$1,000	x				
\$1,000 - \$3,000		x			
\$3,000 - \$20,000			x		
Public Work Contracts Up to \$35,000					
Under \$5,000	x				
\$5,000-\$10,000		x			
\$10,000-\$20,000			x		
\$20,000-\$35,000				x	
Emergencies					x
Insurance					x
Attorneys					x
Medical Services					x
Fiscal Advising					x
Professional Services					x
Leases of Personal Property					x
Second Hand Equipment from Other Governments					x
Certain Food & Milk Products					x
Sole Source (for example: patented or monopoly items, textbooks, etc.)					x

* RFP: Request for Proposal

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EXPLANATIONS OF OTHER METHODS OF COMPETITION TO BE USED FOR NON-BID PROCUREMENTS

Emergencies:

Informal solicitation of quotes or otherwise, to the extent practicable under the circumstances

Second-Hand Equipment from Federal and State Governments:

Section 103(6) of the General Municipal Law provides a statutory exception to the competitive bidding requirement by permitting the purchase of surplus and second-hand supplies, materials or equipment without competitive bidding from the federal or state governments or from any other political subdivision or public benefit corporation with the state.

Certain Food and Milk Purchases:

Section 103(a) and (10) of the General Municipal Law provides a statutory exception to the competitive bidding requirement by permitting a Board of Education to separately purchase eggs, livestock, fish and dairy products (including milk), juice, grains and species of fresh fruits and vegetables directly from producers, growers or certain processors without bidding.

Sole Source:

Section 103 of the General Municipal Law provides a statutory exception to the competitive bidding requirement in limited situations where there is only one possible source from which to procure goods or services required in the public interest (such as in the case of certain patented goods or services or public utility services).

Limited Number of Vendors:

In the event that only a limited number of vendors are available for a specific purchase or public work, the purchasing agent shall write a memo to the claims auditor explaining the process to obtain quotes and/or the specific reasons why the required number of quotes was not obtained.

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