

## 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 general supervision 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 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.

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.

Comments will be solicited from those administrators involved in the procurement process before enactment of the district's policies regarding purchasing and from time to time thereafter. The policies must then be adopted by Board resolution. All district policies regarding the procurement processes will be reviewed by the Board at least annually.

### *Procedures*

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 \$10,000 and public work contracts involving an expenditure of more than \$20,000 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 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 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*

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. 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. 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. *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:

1. emergency situations where:
  - a. the situation arises out of an accident or unforeseen occurrence or condition;
  - b. a district building, property, or the life, health, or safety of an individual on district property is affected; or
  - c. 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;

2. 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;

3. 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;

4. 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;

5. when the district purchases goods, supplies and services from municipal hospitals under joint contracts and arrangements entered into pursuant to section 2803-a of the Public Health Law.

Documentation: The district will maintain the legal authorization, Board authorization and market price comparisons; or

6. 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.

#### V. *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.

##### 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. For example, with regard to insurance, the district will maintain documentation that will include bid advertisements, specifications and the awarding resolution. Alternatively, written or verbal quotation forms will serve as documentation if formal bidding is not required. Requests for Proposals" (RFPs), documented in the same manner as described herein, may also be used;

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 \$10,000
  - a. Contracts from \$100 to \$1,000: Verbal quotes  
Documentation will include notations of verbal quotes.
  - b. Contracts in excess of \$1,000 to \$10,000: Written quotes
2. Public Work Contracts up to \$20,000
  - a. Contracts from \$1,000 to \$5,000: Verbal quotes  
Documentation will include notations of verbal quotes.
  - b. Contracts in excess of \$10,000 to \$20,000: Written quotes
3. Emergencies: Verbal quotes  
Documentation will include notations of verbal quotes.
4. Insurance: Written quotes  
Documentation will include bid advertisements, specifications and the awarding resolution. Alternatively, written or verbal quotation forms will serve as documentation if formal bidding is not required. Requests for Proposals" (RFPs), documented in the same manner as described herein, may also be used.

5. Professional Services: RFP  
Documentation will include written proposals.
6. Leases of Personal Property: Written quotes  
Documentation will include written quotes, cost-benefit analysis of leasing versus purchasing, etc. The district will note that the contract is a true lease and not an installment purchase contract.
7. Second Hand Equipment from Other Governments: Written quotes  
Documentation will include market price comparisons (verbal or written quotes) and the name of the government.
8. 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.
9. Certain Municipal Hospital Purchases: RFP  
Documentation will include the legal authorization, Board authorization, and market price comparisons.
10. 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.

VI. *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 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.

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.

VII. *Procurements from Other than the Lowest Responsible Dollar Offeror*

The district will provide justification and documentation of any contract awarded to an offeror other than the lowest responsible dollar offeror, 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.

VIII. *Internal Control*

The Board authorizes the Superintendent of Schools, with the assistance of the Purchasing Agent, 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.

Comments will be solicited from those administrators involved in the procurement process before enactment of the district's regulations regarding purchasing and from time to time thereafter. The regulations must then be adopted by Board resolution. All district regulations regarding the procurement processes will be reviewed by the Board at least annually.

The unintentional failure to fully comply with the provisions of section 104-b of the General Municipal Law or the district's regulations regarding procurement will not be grounds to void action taken or give rise to a cause of action against the district or any officer or employee of the district.

Cross-ref: 2160, School District Officer and Employee Code of Ethics  
6670, Petty Cash/Petty Cash Accounts

Ref: Education Law §§305(14); 1709(9)(14)(22)  
General Municipal Law §§102; 103; 104-b; 109-a; 800 et seq.  
8 NYCRR §§114.3; 114.4; 170.2

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