

BIDDING/PURCHASING REQUIREMENTS

The Board of Directors expects all purchases made by the school district to be consistent with applicable laws and sound business practices. The Superintendent shall be responsible for developing and implementing administrative procedures for bidding and purchasing consistent with this policy.

This policy is intended solely as an internal guide to purchasing by the school district. It does not afford any vendor any property or contractual rights against the school district. No vendor shall have any enforceable rights against the school district based upon this policy or alleged violations of this policy. No vendor shall have any rights against the school district until such time as a written contract between the vendor and the school district is executed by the vendor and an authorized representative of the school district.

A. Bidding Required by Law

Maine law requires the Board to competitively bid property and casualty insurance; school bus and transportation contracts in excess of \$4,000; school building construction, alterations and repairs over \$25,000 (except contracts for professional architectural and engineering services); and bond anticipation notes for state-subsidized school construction projects.

B. Competitive Bidding of Other Purchases

Where bidding is not required by law, it shall be the policy of the school district to competitively bid purchases of equipment, supplies, materials or services over \$7500 provided that it is practical and cost-effective to specify the materials or services with sufficient particularity to allow meaningful comparison of bids.

If competitive bidding is not utilized, the Superintendent may seek Requests for Proposals (RFP) for purchases over \$4000. An RFP identifies the need the school district intends to meet, but permits the vendor to propose the manner in which the work is to be performed and the materials to be used.

State and/or cooperative bids or RFP's may be substituted for local bids when it is in the best interest of the district.

The Superintendent may forego the competitive bid or RFP process only when he/she determines that quality, expertise, time factors, or other important considerations outweigh the possible benefits of bidding or requesting proposals. In each such case, the Board shall be informed of the Superintendent's decision and the reasons for it in advance of entering into a contract.

C. Procedures for Bidding and Requesting Proposals

The method of inviting bids and RFP's and the contents/instructions of the invitation will promote fairness and competition. The method of notification that the school district uses to solicit bids and proposals shall be reasonably designed to attract qualified vendors. Depending upon the circumstances, such notification may include public advertising and/or mailing of notices to potential vendors.

Bid Procedures

- A. The notification shall specify the deadline for submitting bids and the time and place of bid opening. Bid alternates shall be permitted at the discretion of the Superintendent. The notice shall reserve the right of the school district to reject any or all bids, and to waive technical or immaterial non-conformities in bids if in the best interest of the school district, and to exercise judgment in evaluating bids.
- B. Written bids. Bids shall be in writing, sealed with outside envelope or wrapper plainly marked "Bid, not to be opened until (insert appropriate date)," and mailed or filed with the Superintendent of the district.
- C. Time of opening. A School Board member or employee of the school district may not open a bid until the appointed time.
- D. Public opening. At the time and place stated in the public notice, and open to the public, all bids shall be opened by the Superintendent or, in the Superintendent's absence or disability, by any School Board member designated for the purpose by the Chair of the School Board.
- E. Reading. If any citizens who are not School Board members or employees of the school district or if any representatives of the press are present, bids shall, at that time, either be made available for examination by them or shall be read aloud in a manner to be heard plainly by those in attendance.
- F. In general, the School Board will award contracts to the lowest bidder which the Superintendent and School Board deem can satisfactorily fulfill the contract.

RFP Procedures

- A. Proposals should be submitted in plain envelopes clearly marked "Proposal, not to be opened until (state time and date)." The RFP shall state the time and date that proposals shall be opened, and no proposals shall be opened before that time. Public opening is not required.
- B. Proposals are to be evaluated based on criteria appropriate for the project in question, and the contract will be awarded to the vendor whom the Superintendent and School Board deem best able to meet the requirements of the school district.

Procurement Methods for Federally Funded Projects

The Superintendent or his or her designee shall be responsible for developing, updating as necessary, and implementing a written administrative procedures manual (hereafter, the “Federal Procurement Manual”) to govern the procurement and purchase of property, goods, and services using any federal award¹ that is subject to the Uniform Grant Guidance, codified at 2 CFR Part 200 (“UGG Federal Award”). The Federal Procurement Manual shall be consistent with all applicable federal laws and rules.

Notwithstanding any policy provision to the contrary, the procurement and purchase of property, goods, and services using a UGG Federal Award, in whole or in part, must comply with the Federal Procurement Manual. Wherever this policy or any of the school unit’s administrative procedures are inconsistent with federal laws or rules, the provisions of the federal laws or rules shall control.

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Legal Reference: 34 CFR Parts 74 and 80 (Education Department General Administrative Regulations (“EDGAR”)) (for federal awards made prior to 12/26/2014)

2 CFR Part 200 (Uniform Administrative Requirements) (for federal awards made on or after 12/26/2014)

5 MRSA § 1743-A (ALL)

20-A MRSA §§ 1001(14), 5401(13)(D); 5402 (ALL)

20-A MRSA § 1314 (MSAD)

§ 13 c (Maine State Board of Education Rules for School Construction Projects) (ALL)

Cross Reference: DJH – Purchasing and Contracting: Procurement Staff Code of Conduct
DJ-R – Federal Procurement Manual

¹ A “federal award” is any federal financial assistance (including cost-reimbursement contracts) that a school unit receives either directly from a federal agency or indirectly from a pass-through entity such as the State education department. See 2 CFR § 200.38. Most, but not all, federal awards received by a school unit are subject to the Uniform Grant Guidance. To confirm whether a federal award is subject to the Uniform Grant Guidance, review the terms and conditions of the applicable grant agreement or cooperative agreement and the applicability provisions of the Uniform Grant Guidance, codified at 2 CFR § 200.101.

Adopted: November 13, 2006

Amended: June 12, 2017