



CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT OF ALBANY PURCHASING

Introduction

The purchasing, receiving, storing and distribution of necessary supplies, equipment and services for use in the educational program and for the various auxiliary services represent a significant expenditure in the school budget. These items must be procured efficiently and economically, in order to maximize the educational dollar. It is, therefore, essential that a purchasing policy and procedures be clearly established and understood by all concerned.

Statement of Philosophy

Whenever the law does not require a school district to provide goods and services by competitive bidding, the goods and services must be procured in a manner so as to assure the prudent and economical use of public monies in the best interests of the taxpayers. Goods and services must be bought so as 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. To further these objectives, the governing board of every political subdivision and any school district therein, by resolution, shall adopt internal policies and procedures governing all procurement of goods and services which are not required to be made pursuant to the competitive bidding requirements of section one hundred three (S103) of the General Municipal Law (GML) or of any other general, special or local law (S104-b GML).

1. The function of the purchasing office is to serve the educational program by procuring the necessary supplies, equipment and services.
2. The Board of Education declares its intention to purchase competitively without prejudice and to seek maximum value for every dollar expended.
3. The acquisition of services, equipment and supplies is centralized in the purchasing department, which functions under the supervision of a person designated by the Board of Education as purchasing agent, and through whose office all purchasing transactions are conducted.

PURCHASING POLICY

1. The purchasing agent is appointed by the Board of Education. He/she shall be responsible for developing and administering the purchasing program of the school district. Except for procurement made pursuant to S103 or S104 of the General Municipal Law, S175 of the State Finance Law, S184 of the Correction Law, and the policies and procedures adopted pursuant to 104-b GML, alternative quotations for goods and services shall be secured by use of written quotations or verbal quotations which furthers the purposes of S104-b and of S103 GML.
2. Competitive bids or quotations shall be solicited in connection with all purchasing whenever possible. Contracts shall be awarded to the lowest responsible bidder complying with specifications and with other stipulated bidding conditions.

3. The purchasing agent is authorized to issue purchase orders without prior approval of the Board of Education where formal bidding procedures are not required by law and when budget appropriations are adequate to cover such obligations.
4. The purchasing agent shall solicit competitive bids for all public work contracts exceeding \$20,000 and all purchase contracts exceeding \$10,000 in accordance with S103 of GML (as amended effective January 1, 1992); and the contract shall be awarded on the basis of public advertising and competitive bidding. The purchasing agent must determine whether a purchase of goods or services in the aggregate amount is subject to competitive bidding and document the basis for any determination that competitive bidding is not required by law (GML S103 and S104-b). The purchasing agent is authorized to open bids and record the same pursuant to law (S103 GML).
5. 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. 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. Verbal Quotations: the purchase 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;
 - b. 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. Alternatively, written or verbal quotation forms will serve as documentation if formal bidding is not required.
 - c. Request for Proposals (RFP): for professional services the district will contact a number of professionals 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:
 - (1) the special knowledge or expertise of the professional or consultant service;
 - (2) the quality of the service to be provided.
 - (3) the staffing of the service; and
 - (4) the suitability for the district's needs.The district will prepare an RFP, which will contain details of the engagement, including the methods which it will use in selecting the service.
6. All contracts which require public advertising and competitive bidding shall be awarded by resolution of the Board of Education. Recommendations for the award of all such contracts shall be submitted to the Board of Education by the chief school officer or his/her designee.
7. It is the responsibility of the Board of Education to justify and document any contract awarded to other than the lowest responsible bidder, setting forth the reasons for such an award.
8. Residence or place of business of local bidders may be a consideration only in cases where identical bids have been submitted.
9. Purchases shall be made through available State Contracts of the New York State Division of Standards and Purchase, whenever such purchases are in the best interest of the school district.

10. The purchasing agent shall identify needed commodities available from preferred vendors: Department of Corrections (SS184 Corrections Law), Industries of the Blind and Industries of the Handicapped (S175 of the State Finance Law), and arrange purchases accordingly.
11. Items commonly used in the various schools or departments thereof shall be standardized whenever consistent with educational goals and in the interest of efficiency and economy.
12. The purchasing procedures employed shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations of the State and Commissioner of Education. (Section 170.2 (K&L) of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education).
13. A statement of "General Conditions" as approved by the Board of Education shall be included with all specifications submitted to suppliers for their bids. These general conditions shall be incorporated in all contracts awarded for the purchase of materials, equipment and supplies.
14. Opportunity shall be provided to all responsible suppliers to do business with the City School District of Albany. To this end, the purchasing agent shall develop and maintain lists of potential bidders for the various types of materials, equipment and supplies required. Such bidder list shall be used in the development of a mailing list for distribution of specifications and invitations to bid. Any supplier may be included in the list upon request.
15. No board member, officer or employee of the City School District of Albany or their families (as defined in Sections 800 through 808 of the General Municipal Law shall be interested financially in any contract entered into by the Board of Education. The stipulation shall also preclude acceptance of any gratuities, financial or otherwise, from any supplier or materials or services to the district.
16. The New York State and the City of Albany Directories of Certified Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprises will be used when creating the bidders list for each individual bid. A copy of each bid will be given to the Affirmative Action Officer along with a copy of the list of bidders that are on the mailing list. Additional bids will be mailed upon request.
17. The City School District of Albany is an Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity Enterprise.
18. The purchasing policy shall adhere to the City School District of Albany's Affirmative Action Purchasing Plan.
19. In the event of emergencies (i.e. health and safety situations), where competitive bidding cannot be implemented in a timely fashion, the Board of Education will be informed at its next regular meeting. A resolution for declaration of an emergency will be presented which will request confirmation of the action taken.

PURCHASING PROCEDURES

General

1. Only the person designated by the Board of Education as purchasing agent may commit the district for a purchase.
2. The materials, equipment, supplies and/or services to be purchased shall be of the quality required to serve the function in a satisfactory manner, as determined by the purchasing agent in consultation with the requisitioner.

3. It is the responsibility of the requisitioner to provide an adequate description as required by the purchasing agent, so that he/she may be able to prepare the specifications and to procure, most expeditiously and economically, the desired commodity and/or service.
4. It is the responsibility of the purchasing agent to make alternate suggestions to the requisitioner if, in the judgment of the purchasing agent, the specifications would restrict competition or otherwise preclude the most economical purchase of the required items. In the case of disagreement, either party may refer the matter to the Assistant Superintendent for Business Affairs.
5. When a low bidder proposes an alternate as “an equal” to that specified, it is the responsibility of the purchasing agent to determine whether the proposed substitution is, in fact, an equal. Such decision shall be based on his/her evaluation and that of the requisitioner and the purchasing agent. Either party may refer the matter to the Assistant Superintendent for Business Affairs.

Requisitioning

1. The following are designated as “requisitioners”, that is, they are authorized to issue requisitions against stipulated categories of budgetary appropriations: superintendent, assistant superintendent, directors, supervisors, coordinators and building principals. Other employees of the district may initiate requisitions, which will be signed as approved by the appropriate administrative staff. Each requisitioner shall be responsible for limiting his/her requisitions to the amounts appropriated for his/her school or department budget.
2. Only forms provided by the purchasing agent shall be used for requisitioning.
3. Standard supply lists of commonly used items shall be jointly developed for all categories or groups of supplies by the purchasing agent and the appropriate requisitioners. These standard lists shall be used as a basis for requisitioning.
4. Items not specifically included on standard supply lists shall be requisitioned on the regular requisition form.
5. Requisitions shall be submitted to conform with the purchasing schedule as established by the purchasing agent.
6. Requisitions shall be prepared in duplicate, the copy to be retained by the requisitioner.
7. A requisition, to be considered appropriate for processing shall meet the following requirements:
 - a. Be issued by and bear the signature of an authorized requisitioner.
 - b. Contain adequate information including date, complete vendor name and address and correct budget code.
 - c. Have the approval of an administrator as indicated in paragraph 1.
8. All approved requisitions shall be submitted to the purchasing agent.
9. After processing the original copy of the requisition shall be filed in the purchasing office with the purchase office copy of the purchase order.

PURCHASE ORDERS

1. Only the purchasing agent is authorized to issue purchase orders. In cases of absence, the Assistant Superintendent for Business Affairs may issue purchase orders.

2. The purchasing agent shall prepare an annual purchasing schedule consistent with the users' needs and the efficient functioning of the purchase office.
3. Purchase orders shall include the following essentials:
 - a. A specification that adequately describes to the supplier the characteristics and the quality standards of the item required.
 - b. A firm, quoted, net delivered price, whenever possible. Prices should be shown per unit and extended.
 - c. Clear delivery instructions.
 - d. Budget account code number.
 - e. Be verified for adequacy of budgetary appropriation.
 - f. Signature of purchasing agent.
4. Verification of Receipt – the pink purchase order copy must be signed and returned to the Purchasing Office immediately upon receipt of the items ordered.
5. Purchase orders shall be press-numbered (imprinted) and prepared in sets of five copies each to be used as follows:
 - a. Original to vendor.
 - b. Copy 2 – purchase office copy; numerical file.
 - c. Copy 3 – receiving/paying copy to requisitioner, to be returned after certification as to receipt in proper quantity and satisfactory condition.
 - d. Copy 4 – purchase office copy; later to be filed alphabetically by vendor.
 - e. Copy 5 – to requisitioner, after payment, for the requisitioner's records.
6. Confirmation orders – a verbal order, subject to subsequent confirmation by a written purchase order, may be issued only by the purchasing agent and only in cases where a bona fide emergency situation exists. This procedure should include:
 - a. Whenever possible, a purchase order number should be given to the supplier.
 - b. A purchase order shall be issued immediately thereafter. This purchase order shall be marked "confirmation", indicating the purchase order number if one was given.

Audit of Invoices

1. An invoice, to be submitted to the internal auditor for approval for payment, shall qualify when the following conditions are met:
 - a. It bears the description and price of the item specified on the purchase order, less any allowed discounts.
 - b. It is accompanied by the receiving/paying copy (copy 3) of the purchase order bearing signature of the requisitioner that the item has been received in a satisfactory condition and in the quantity indicated.
 - c. That all extensions are correct, no taxes are paid, discounts are taken and transportation charges where applicable, are accurate.
 - d. That charges are not duplicates of an item(s) already paid.
 - e. That the proposed payment is for a valid and legal purpose.
 - f. That the unit price billed (invoice) does not exceed the bid or contract authorization.
 - g. That it has the approval of the purchasing agent.

Inventory and Inventory Control

1. The purchasing agent shall develop a system for the inventory of equipment to conform to the state's requirements for fixed assets accounting. In addition, the purchasing agent shall develop a system of supply inventory.
2. The purchasing agent shall be responsible for maintaining the inventory of equipment.
3. The purchasing agent shall periodically review the inventory records and make personal inspections of all district storage spaces to ascertain surpluses or shortages of materials and equipment.
4. The purchasing agent and/or the Assistant Superintendent for Business Affairs, in accordance with established procedures, may authorize the transfer for equipment.