



PROCEDURE PR.558.FIN

TITLE: TENDERING, PURCHASING AND ACQUISITION OF SUPPLIES AND SERVICES

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1.0 OBJECTIVE

To delegate purchasing authority for the acquisition of supplies and services within specified limits and approved procedures.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

Bid: A written quotation, given on request, usually in competition with other suppliers. An offer to sell specific goods and/or services at a specified price.

Bidder: A supplier who submits a bid.

Bid Protest: A bid protest is a vendor's complaint concerning any aspect of the procurement process.

Competitive Bid Process: Supplies, equipment and services must be acquired through a competitive bid process that ensures the best value for the funds expended, while meeting the specific stated needs and while promoting transparency, fair dealings and equitable relationships.

District: The Ottawa-Carleton District School Board

Expression of Interest: A submission from a supplier, as a result of a formal request for an expression of interest, wishing to enter into business with the District by describing that the supplier has the ability, skills and expertise to perform the scope of work desired.

Formal Quotation/Tender: A formal quotation/ tender is a submission in writing on a prescribed form by a supplier indicating price and terms for provision of goods and/or services.

Informal Quotation: A written informal quotation is a statement of price, terms of sale and description of goods or services offered by a supplier in response to an inquiry.

Proposal: A proposal is a submission in writing which outlines a solution, including a proposed method and means of achieving a desired goal.

Purchase Requisition: An internal form used to request the purchase of goods and/or services.

Purchase Order: A written communication to convey offers to suppliers, to accept offers from suppliers, to confirm already existing verbal contracts and to otherwise formalize a purchase transaction with a supplier.

Single source: A term used when, usually due to an emergency, only one supplier is approached for a particular good or service.

Sole source: A sole source is one supplier only can supply the goods or services required, normally the manufacturer of the item.

Standing Offer Contract: A standing offer contract provides schools and administrative divisions with a source of supply for goods and/or services at pre-established prices and fixed terms and conditions for specific periods of time on an “as and when required” basis.

Supplier: A firm or individual that can provide goods or services required by the District.

3.0 RESPONSIBILITY

Chief Financial Officer.

4.0 COMPETITIVE BID PROCEDURES

- 4.1 All schools and departments will purchase from, and be bound by, the terms and conditions of the Standing Offer tender contracts in place resulting from a formal competitive bid process issued by the Purchasing Division. A complete listing of the Standing Offer tender contracts are available by inquiring on BEAM, Purchasing Folder, BAS 2000 Purchasing Guides.
- 4.2 All assets, as defined in Policy P.055.FIN Asset Management, (classroom and office equipment, furniture, computers, A.V. equipment, technology equipment etc.) must be requisitioned through the electronic requisitioning system (BAS) and purchased with the issuance of a purchase order for asset tracking and insurance replacement purposes.
- 4.3 All schools and departments will be bound by this procedure with the exception of pilot projects that are pre-authorized by the Director's Executive Council or the Board.
- 4.4 Solicitations for competitive bids require the requisitioners to provide specifications (goods) or statements of work (services) that are detailed and include all necessary information to correctly identify the good required or to describe the function or service required.
- 4.5 Bids will be solicited and obtained within the following limitations (exclusive of tax):
 - (a) up to \$2,500: the requisitioners will solicit a verbal quotation for the goods or services required, for items not included in 4.1 and 4.2 above, and will submit the requisition to the Purchasing Division through the Purchasing Module of the Financial system (BAS) for processing or will purchase the goods or services direct using the District Purchase card (P-card);

- (b) from \$2,501 to \$5,000: the requisitioners will solicit a minimum of two written quotations, for items not included in 4.1 above, and will submit the requisition and copies of the quotations to the Purchasing Division through the Purchasing Module of the Financial system (BAS) for approval and processing;
- (c) from \$5,001 to \$25,000: the requisitioners will solicit a minimum of three written quotations, for items not included in 4.1 above, and will submit the requisition and copies of the quotations to the Purchasing Division through the Purchasing Module of the Financial system (BAS) for approval and processing;
- (d) from \$25,001 to \$50,000: through a request to the Purchasing Division for a formal quotation to be administered by Purchasing;
- (e) \$50,001 and over: through a request to the Purchasing Division for a formal tender/request for proposal (RFP) to be administered by Purchasing.

5.0 COMPETITIVE BID PROCEDURES

Notwithstanding 4.1 above, in exceptional circumstances a single source requisition for supplies and/or services may be required because there is a sole source for a product, or because specific expertise is required. In such a case the requisition must be pre-authorized by the responsible Superintendent and the Chief Financial Officer or the Director of Education.

6.0 PURCHASING

6.1 Formal Tender, Quotation, Proposal, Expression of Interest and Prequalification documents will be prepared and issued by the Purchasing Division as follows:

- (a) prospective bidders will be provided with clear instructions including closing date and time, complete specifications (goods) or scope of work (services), evaluation criteria and scoring factors (where applicable), and standard terms and conditions and the contract document that will be utilized;
- (b) for all purchases of \$100,000 or more, bid requests will be advertised through an electronic tendering system, for a minimum period of 15 calendar days, that is equally accessible to all Canadian suppliers;
- (c) the specified closing time and date will be set on a normal working day (Monday to Friday, excluding Ontario and national holidays) and allow reasonable time for preparation and submission of bids;
- (d) all submissions will be received by the Purchasing Division, where the date and time will be stamped on each submission, and the submissions will be retained in a locked receptacle until the closing time;
- (e) the Coordinator of Purchasing (or designate) will determine the holding of public openings immediately after the closing time based on the type of bid solicitation, value, and complexity;

- (f) addenda, where required, will be issued by the Purchasing Division and will be posted at least two (2) days prior to the bid solicitation closing or at least seven (7) days prior to the bid solicitation closing (for purchases of \$100,000 or more). Addenda will be posted in the same manner as the original competitive bid documents and will be made available to all potential proponents;
- (g) bidders will be permitted to withdraw or revise their submissions prior to the closing time and date;
- (h) late submissions will be time and date stamped, and returned unopened to the bidder.

7.0 EVALUATION

7.1 The submissions will be evaluated and the contracts will be awarded as follows:

- (a) the Purchasing Division will record the submissions received, review the submissions for compliance, analyze the submissions and prepare a spreadsheet/summary evaluation noting the lowest bidder or the highest ranked submission for the requisitioning division's review;
- (b) or in the case of complex procurement, the Purchasing Division will review the submissions for compliance and provide copies of the submissions and evaluation scoring sheets to the evaluation committee members for review and individual scoring, with a subsequent evaluation committee meeting to develop a consensus score and ranking of the submissions received;
- (c) once the requisitioners have or evaluation committee has completed the review or evaluation process, the Purchasing Division will be informed to award a contract to the highest ranked proponent;
- (d) the Purchasing Division will confirm that all levels of signing authority have been received, in accordance with the Signing Authority Policy and Procedure;
- (e) the Purchasing Division will notify the successful bidder of the intent to award the contract and will ensure that a formal written contract agreement/purchase order is executed;
- (f) if the lowest bid (where price is the only determining factor) or highest ranked proponent (where published evaluation criteria is followed) is not recommended, a detailed report substantiating the recommendation will be submitted to the Chief Financial Officer for approval before the contract award results are announced.
- (g) where appropriate, sustainability or environmental stewardship considerations shall be one of the evaluation criterions.

7.2 In cases where the acquisition of services or supplies is complex in nature, legal counsel will be retained by the District to ensure there is compliance with all pertinent requirements and will review and/or make revisions to the contract documents prior to being signed in accordance with Board Policy P.007.FIN and Procedure PR.502.FIN, Signing Authority and Spending Controls.

8.0 CONTRACT AWARD

The Coordinator of Purchasing (or designate) is responsible for the issuance of contracts or purchase orders for all goods or services for which funds have been provided in the approved annual budget, and is responsible for obtaining the signature(s) of the Chief Financial Officer, the Director of Education and/or the Chair of the Board on contractual documents upon completion of the underlying tendering and approval process.

9.0 PROCUREMENT DOCUMENTS AND RECORDS RETENTION

- 9.1 The Purchasing Division will ensure that all procurement documentation and processes are maintained and safeguarded in compliance with Board Policy P.072.GOV: Corporate Records Management and Policy P.128.GOV: Privacy (*Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*).
- 9.2 All proponents shall be aware of the requirements of Board Policy P.128.GOV: Privacy and shall identify any information in their proposal submission or any accompanying documentation, supplied in confidence for which confidentiality shall be maintained by the District.
- 9.3 Proponents' documentation will be disclosed on a confidential basis to the District's advisers or employees retained for the purpose of evaluating or participating in the evaluation of their proposals.

10.0 VENDOR DEBRIEFING

- 10.1 Upon request, the Purchasing Division will provide unsuccessful vendors an opportunity for a vendor debriefing session.
- 10.2 A vendor debriefing provides vendors with an opportunity to find out how their submission scored against published evaluation criteria and to obtain constructive feedback from the evaluation team on the vendor's submission and how the vendor may improve future submission.
- 10.3 Under no circumstances will information with respect to the successful vendor or other vendor(s) submissions be discussed.

11.0 BID PROTEST

- 11.1 A vendor may submit a written bid protest to the Coordinator of Purchasing concerning any aspect of the procurement process.
- 11.2 Prior to initiating a protest, vendors are strongly encouraged to resolve issues by contacting the Purchasing Division contact noted in the competitive bid document. Experience has demonstrated that there are often minor errors, omissions or other inadvertent actions which can be quickly clarified or corrected to the satisfaction of the complainant.

- 11.3 The bid protest provides an opportunity for the vendor to voice complaints. It is not an adjudicative process nor does it provide a mechanism to adjudicate substantive disputes.
- 11.4 Vendor protests are to be submitted in written form no later than ten (10) days after a notice of contract award.

12.0 METHODS OF PURCHASING/PAYMENT

- 12.1 There are three methods to purchase goods/services subsequent to the solicitation of bids as outlined in 4.0 Competitive Bid Procedures above.
- 12.2 Based on dollar thresholds (see 4.0 above), purchases shall be made using the District's Purchasing Module of the Financial system (BAS).
- 12.3 All low value purchases shall be made using the Purchase Card. Refer to procedure PR.651.FIN, Purchase Cards.
- 12.4 In exceptional cases, cheque requisitions may be used for items that are not covered under a Standing Offer tender contract (see 4.1 above) or are not defined as assets (see 4.2 above).

13.0 ITEMS NOT REQUIRING A PURCHASE ORDER

- 13.1 The following items do not require a purchase order:
 - (a) Staff training and development, such as, conferences, seminars, courses, conventions, workshops and associated fees;
 - (b) Professional membership fees;
 - (c) Subscriptions for magazines and periodicals;
 - (d) Refundable employee expenses, such as, travel, mileage and accommodations;
 - (e) Utility charges, such as, hydro, natural gas, water and sewer, cable, telephone and postage;
 - (f) Charges to and from other government bodies;
 - (g) Real estate transactions; and
 - (h) Items of a confidential nature.

14.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

The Education Act, 1998, Section 181 (2)
Board Policy P.007.FIN: Signing Authority and Spending Controls
Board Policy P.057.FIN: Acquisition of Major Services

Board Policy P.069.FIN: Tendering, Purchasing and Acquisition of Supplies and Services
Board Policy P.055.FIN: Asset Management
Board Policy P.116.FIN: Purchase Card
Board Procedure PR.502.FIN: Spending Authorization and Controls
Board Procedure PR.557.FIN: Acquisition of Major Services
Board Procedure PR. 545.FIN: Asset Management
Board Procedure PR. 651.FIN: Purchase Card