

# HOW TO DO BUSINESS WITH THE COBB COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT



VENDOR HANDBOOK  
2008-2009



# COBB COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Procurement Services Department

### **Purpose of the Vendor's Handbook**

The purpose of the Vendor's Handbook is to provide information to prospective vendors that will make doing business with the Cobb County School District a positive, effective, efficient process. CCSD values each relationship and strives to create a purchasing atmosphere which is equitable, transparent and leads to a mutually beneficial solution for all parties involved. While this handbook does not encompass every detail of all laws, regulations, policies, and processes governing our purchasing practices, it does provide the basic principles of our procurement methods. Feel free to call or email with any questions pertaining to this handbook, CCSD purchasing regulations or our process. We desire and appreciate your feedback.



# COBB COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Procurement Services Department

Dear Vendor:

Thank you for your interest in the Cobb County School District. While most governmental purchasing departments function in similar ways, there are often unique characteristics of each entity that are important to consider. The intent of this handbook is to allow all prospective vendors the opportunity to earn business with the District by learning how we function. Full and open competition is the foundation of our purchasing program as we abide by the policies and procedures mandated by the Cobb County Board of Education and all applicable Federal and State regulations.

As mentioned, this publication is an overview of who we are and how we operate. Understanding this information will increase the likelihood of earning business and increasing the return on your investment. We have found that there is a positive correlation between the vendors that understand public purchasing principles and the vendors that are awarded contracts. We look forward to establishing a mutually beneficial business relationship with your organization. Please contact us at 770-590-4524 if we can provide any additional information not included in this manual.

Sincerely:

Alisa Morningstar  
Director of Procurement Services

## AWARDS

The Cobb County School District (CCSD) Procurement Services Department received the following awards for "*Best Practices*" in governmental purchasing:

- In 2003 & 2006, *The Outstanding Agency Accreditation Achievement Award* (OA4) - 2nd consecutive three-year certification
- In 2005, 2006, 2007 & 2008, *The Achievement of Excellence in Procurement* (AEP) - annual award for four consecutive years
- In 2004, *The Pareto Award* - One time award for agencies achieving the pinnacle in Procurement. CCSD's Procurement Services Department is the only educational entity to receive the Pareto Award





# COBB COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Who We Are

The Cobb County School District is the second largest school system in Georgia and among the largest in the United States, with a current enrollment of more than 107,000. Its student population grows by nearly 2,000 each year, and with more than 15,000 full-time employees, nearly 8,800 of whom are classroom teachers and other certified personnel, the School District is the largest employer in the county.

All Cobb County schools are accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and the district is among the first to have earned district-wide accreditation. Every school has implemented Performance Based Instruction for every student, meaning that students will know, do, use and communicate what they are learning. Cobb schools have earned 16 National Blue Ribbon-No Child Left Behind School awards and 34 Georgia Schools of Excellence awards. In addition, individual schools, staff members and students receive numerous local, state and national awards each year.

Parental and community involvement is a hallmark in the District, as demonstrated through 100 percent PTA participation in most schools, the addition of School Councils, and the Partners in Education Program — a joint effort with the Cobb Chamber of Commerce — that supports school-business partnerships in every Cobb school. The School District has more than 1000 Partners in Education as of August 2007 and the numbers continue to grow.

Cobb students consistently score above the national average on norm-referenced tests. In 2007, 80% of Cobb seniors took the newly reformatted Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT), achieving a combined average score of 1534, while the national combined average score was 1511, and the state average score was 1472.

The District boasts six magnet programs including the International Baccalaureate Program (Campbell High School), the Advanced Mathematics and Science Academy (Kennesaw Mountain High School), the North Cobb School for International Studies (North Cobb High School) the Center for Excellence in Performing Arts (Pebblebrook High School), the Academy of Research and Medical Science (South Cobb High School), and the Center for Advanced Studies in Science, Mathematics and Technology (Wheeler High School). The District has three established charter schools.

The Cobb County School District is responsible for educating students in a diverse, growing and constantly changing suburban environment. The district meets this challenge by focusing on four key areas: improving student achievement, developing leaders, being fiscally responsible and building relationships among schools, families, businesses and the wider Cobb County community.



# COBB COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Fast Facts

### FAST FACTS

**The Cobb County School District will serve over 107,000 students during the 2008-2009 school year in the following facilities:**

- Total Number of Schools – 114
- Elementary Schools – 68
- Middle Schools - 25
- High Schools - 16
- Open Campus High School - 1
- Special Education Centers - 2
- Adult Education Center - 1
- Performance Learning Center - 1

**The School District is the largest employer in Cobb County. Among the more than 15,229 employees are:**

- 6,838 Classroom Teachers
- 1,531 Special Education Teachers
- 78 Area Lead Teachers
- 330 School Counselors
- 48 School Social Workers
- 47 School Psychologists
- 131 Media Specialists
- 1,538 Paraprofessionals
- 383 Principals, Assistant Principals and Administrative Assistants
- 1,153 Bus Drivers, Fleet Maint. and Other Transportation Workers
- 718 Maintenance, Custodians and Operations Workers
- 1042 Food Service Managers, Cafeteria Workers and Support Staff
- 685 School Support Staff
- 40 Safety & Security Staff, including Campus Police

### **Ethnic Breakdown of Students - March 2008**

- White 46.8%
- Black 29.7%
- Hispanic 14.4%
- Asian 4.5%
- Multi-Racial 4.5%
- American Indian 0.2%

### **Ethnic Breakdown of Staff**

- White 77.5%
- Black 18.1%
- Hispanic 2.4%
- Asian 1.2%
- Multi-Racial 0.7%
- American Indian 0.1%



# PROCUREMENT SERVICES

## What We Believe

### **Vision**

We strive to obtain fair and reasonable prices for goods and services. Secure and deliver support materials in an orderly and timely fashion and guarantee premium services to the school system.

### **Mission**

The mission of the Cobb County School District Procurement Services Department is to provide students and staff a selection of quality products, services, and vendors for the benefit of the educational process, accomplished through cost effective, moral, ethical and prudent purchasing practices.

### **Code of Ethics**

The Cobb County School District (CCSD) Procurement Services Department recognizes purchasing as a profession and adopts the Code of Ethics promulgated by the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing (NIGP).

The CCSD Procurement Services Department recognizes that the Code of Ethics sets appropriate standards for purchasing and the CCSD Procurement Services Department expects adherence to the Code of Ethics by all employees of the Department.

The CCSD Procurement Services Department recognizes that employees of the Procurement Services Department are public employees. As such, these employees have the responsibility to uphold the public trust and to refrain from using their position for private benefit.

Therefore, it is the policy of the CCSD Procurement Services Department that employees shall, in addition to all other expectations and job requirements, refrain from conflicts of interest and avoid the appearance of unethical or compromising practices in business relationships, actions and communications.

Reference: <http://www.nigp.org/genlinfo/2001CodeofEthics.pdf>

### **Purchasing Regulations**

Procurement Service is committed to compliance with CCSD Board Policy through the application of CCSD Purchasing Regulations as published on the Procurement Services website located at <http://www.cobbk12.org/Departments/BS/BSPurchasing/index.htm>. Please click on the link to the left titled "Purchasing Regulations" for the entire document.



# PROCUREMENT SERVICES

## Department Information

### STAFF INFORMATION

**Department Phone: 770-590-4524**

**Department Fax: 770-426-3371**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Email</b>
Director	Alisa Morningstar	770-590-4524	Alisa.Morningstar@cobbk12.org
Asst. Director	Mike Gazell	770-590-4524	Mike.Gazell@cobbk12.org
Procurement Clerk	Damaris Whyte	770-590-4524	Damaris.Whyte@cobbk12.org
Purchasing Agent II	Jill Vestal	770-590-4569	Jill.Vestal@cobbk12.org
Purchasing Agent I	Elaine Bynum	770-590-4522	Elaine.Bynum@cobbk12.org
Purchasing Agent I	Ginny Martin	770-429-5870	Ginny.Martin@cobbk12.org
Purchasing Agent I	Chris McSpadden	770-426-3524	Chris.Mcspadden@cobbk12.org
Purchasing Agent I	Lisa Auzenne	770-426-3369	Lisa.Auzenne@cobbk12.org
Buyer	Lisa Waters	770-426-3415	Lisa.Waters@cobbk12.org
Procurement Tech II	Debra Reed	770-426-3333	Debra.Reed@cobbk12.org
Procurement Tech II	Barbara Bates	770-590-4592	Barbara.Bates@cobbk12.org



# PROCUREMENT SERVICES

## Department Information

### DRIVING DIRECTIONS

#### **Cobb Parkway/Hwy 41**

- Take Cobb Parkway/Hwy 41 North and cross Barrett Parkway
- Go to the 4th traffic light and turn left onto Cobb International Blvd.
- We are approximately 1.6 miles on the left at 6975 Warehouse Bldg.

#### **Coming from I-75:**

- Take 75 to Chastain, Exit 271
- Proceed West on Chastain and it will become Cobb International Boulevard after crossing Cobb Parkway (Hwy. 41)
- Go approximately 1.6 miles to 6975 Warehouse Bldg. on the left

#### **Coming from I-285:**

- Take I-285 to I-75N and follow directions above

#### **Coming from: I-575:**

- Take I-575 to Chastain Road, Exit 3 and go West on Chastain Rd
- Proceed West on Chastain and it will become Cobb International Boulevard after crossing Cobb Parkway (Hwy. 41)
- Go approximately 1.6 miles to 6975 Warehouse Bldg. on the left



# PROCUREMENT SERVICES

## General Purchasing Information

### **What We Purchase**

Procurement Services facilitates the purchasing process between CCSD schools and departments according to all applicable laws, policies and regulations. The purchasing cycle begins when a department (end-user) presents a purchasing need to Procurement Services. As the subject matter expert, the end-user is responsible for writing the specification which details the need or desire. Jointly, the end-user and purchasing agent work to finalize the bid/quote/RFP document for solicitation. Responses are evaluated against specifications by both the end user and purchasing agent. Procurement will issue an award letter to the winning vendors. From this letter, the end user is able to place orders per the terms and conditions of the contract.

### **The Purchasing Process**

CCSD has the need for an extensive variety of commodity goods, finished products and services to support the educational process for the District. This range of needs includes, but is not limited to, office supplies, school buses, paper products, food items, pest control, technology items, sports equipment, band instruments, outsourced services, custodial supplies and much more. The District website, [www.cobbk12.org](http://www.cobbk12.org), contains a link to the Purchasing website. The link is located at the bottom of the page under "District Resources." The Purchasing website includes a list of awarded contracts that should prove very informative for potential vendors.

### **How We Purchase**

CCSD schools and departments make most purchases using one of two methods: (1.) Purchase Order (2.) Procurement Card. Each school/department enters its own Purchase Orders into the CCSD online financial system. After proceeding through the internal approval process, the order is then automatically sent to the vendor via fax. The Procurement Card is a VISA card issued by a local bank. Each school and most departments within CCSD have a procurement card to make low dollar transactions for goods and services. The cards are restricted by dollar limits and by commodity codes. The commodity code assigned to a business is controlled by the VISA authorities, which assign the codes by business type. Our cards restrict purchases to those commodity codes that offer goods and services most likely to be used by a K- 12 school system.



# PROCUREMENT SERVICES

## Competition Thresholds

Except for purchases made in accordance with other provisions of CCSD Purchasing Regulations, all purchases or contracts to purchase goods or services with District funding shall be based on competitive bids, quotations or proposals as detailed below. Complete CCSD Purchasing Regulations can be viewed by accessing the Purchasing website via the link on the District website located at [www.cobbk12.org](http://www.cobbk12.org).

**Purchases less than \$1,000** may be accomplished without multiple quotes. Purchaser should use their best judgment when making the purchase.

**Purchases from \$1,000 to \$9,999.99** may be made at the local school/department level provided two quotes are obtained and logged using a monthly activity log to be reviewed/approved by the principal/department head at least monthly and available for periodic audit.

**Purchases from \$10,000 to \$49,999.99** require the Procurement Services Department to make every attempt to secure at least three competitive quotes.

**Purchases \$50,000 or more** require a formal Bid or Request for Proposal process. Procurement Services will issue the Bid/RFP and make every attempt to solicit at least three responsive and responsible offers. As defined in Board Policy number 2.4, Financial Conditions and Activities, Item 5, Board approval is required for award of Bids/RFPs greater than \$200,000. If a bid or RFP is not currently in place, approximately ninety days lead-time is required to accomplish this.



# PROCUREMENT SERVICES

## Competitive Solicitation Process

**CCSD utilizes three competitive solicitation methods:**

- (1.) Request for Quote**
- (2.) Invitation to Bid**
- (3.) Request for Proposal.**

### **Request for Quote**

As previously stated, regulations allow for each school/department to make purchases at the local level within the parameters described under the competition thresholds. Procurement Services must be involved in any competitive purchase over \$10,000.00. Listed below are some bullet points to know about the Request for Quote (RFQ) process.

- The CCSD end-user (school/department) notifies Procurement Services of the good or service needed and provides specifications.
- Procurement Staff will work with the end-user to prepare a request for quotation for the particular product or service.
- The Request for Quotation is then sent to prospective vendors, usually via fax or email. More expensive, complex RFQs are also posted to the CCSD Current Solicitations website.
- The RFQ is typically “on the street” for 3-5 business days.
- Vendors are required to complete the Request for Quote form and submit to Procurement Services by the date stated in the RFQ.
- Once responses are received, Procurement tabulates results and verifies the validity of the response before sending a recommendation of award to the end-user.
- After confirmation from the end user, Procurement issues an award letter to the lowest responsive, responsible offeror(s) meeting specifications and requirements in the RFQ and the school or department is then able to proceed with the purchase.
- Quotations can be written with firm pricing up to a year and may or may not be available to be renewed annually.



# PROCUREMENT SERVICES

## Competitive Solicitation Process

### **Invitation to Bid**

Purchases totaling \$50,000.00 or more must be made through the formal bid or Request for Proposal process. The Invitation to Bid document is used by the CCSD to purchase goods or services and should not be construed as an order by CCSD to make any purchase. The bidder should review instructions and conditions of the Invitation to Bid and affix all information and signatures as required. The bid documents must be returned to Procurement Services before the time and date indicated for the bid opening as determined by the official date/time stamp of CCSD Procurement Services.

- The CCSD end-user (school/department) notifies Procurement Services of the good or service needed and provides specifications.
- Procurement Staff will work with the end-user to prepare an invitation to bid for the particular product or service.
- An announcement of the invitation to bid is then sent to prospective vendors, usually via fax or email and is posted to the CCSD Current Solicitations website and advertised on local public educational TV stations.
- The invitation to bid is typically open for solicitation or “on the street” for two weeks (10 business days). During this time there may be a pre-bid conference and a question and answer period. All questions and answers are published on the CCSD website for equal access to all vendors.
- The due date/time stated designates the bid “opening”. Responses received by the deadline indicated are opened and prices are read publicly at the date/time stated in the bid document.
- Following receipt of responses, Procurement tabulates results and verifies the validity of the response before sending a recommendation of award to the end-user.
- After confirmation from the end user and Board Approval when applicable, Procurement issues an award letter to the vendor(s) and the school or department is then able to proceed with the purchase.
- For all purchases accomplished by sealed bidding, the award will be made to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder meeting all terms, specifications and requirements. This is the bidder who submits the lowest price, whose bid meets the specifications, terms, and conditions set forth in the Invitation to Bid, and who is clearly capable of delivering the product or services specified. The lowest responsible bidder will not, therefore, always be the bidder who has submitted the lowest monetary bid. Award of bids will be made in the best interest of CCSD.
- Bids can be written with firm pricing up to a year and usually contain an option to renew annually if agreeable to both the successful vendor and the CCSD.



# PROCUREMENT SERVICES

## Competitive Solicitation Process

### Rejection of a Bid

The failure of a bidder to observe and follow the instructions and conditions of a bid can constitute grounds for rejection of a bid and/or removal from the list of bidders. CCSD Procurement Services reserves the right to reject any and all offers submitted in response to any solicitation document, to reject any portion thereof, to accept portions of the offer from several offerors, or to waive any minor irregularity. CCSD Procurement Services reserves the right to award a solicitation under the most beneficial economic terms for the CCSD.

### Common causes for bid rejection:

- Any bid received after the designated time, as determined by the official date/time stamp in Procurement Services, will be deemed late and will not be considered by the CCSD. The use of faxed or emailed bids is discouraged and every effort should be made by the bidder to deliver the hard copy of the bid prior to the designated date and time. **If bids are faxed or emailed, the original hard copy of the bid must be received by Procurement Services the next business day following receipt of the fax. The hard copy will serve as the legal document and any changes made on the faxed or emailed copy must show on the hard copy.** The CCSD Procurement Services fax number is 770.426.3371.
- Bids containing provisions for late charges, whether designated as interest charges or otherwise, will not be considered for an award. Bidders are instructed to refrain from presenting any such provisions, as it may be grounds to consider the bid disqualified and, therefore, rejected. The vendor must initial such changes prior to submitting an offer to CCSD.
- Procurement Services generally requires a minimum of thirty (30) days to evaluate bids for award. Therefore, those that limit the acceptance period to less than thirty (30) days may be rejected. When it is determined that a time period other than thirty (30) days is appropriate, the solicitation document will so indicate.
- Failure on the part of the bidder to submit requested samples within the time specified.
- The addition by the bidder of price escalator clauses, minimum order requirements, or other additional pricing terms not included in the terms and conditions of the solicitation document.
- Failure to bid in accordance with an addendum.
- The bid contains terms and conditions, which are in conflict with the solicitation or CCSD regulations.



# PROCUREMENT SERVICES

## Competitive Solicitation Process

### **Request for Proposal (RFP)**

As stated previously, purchases totaling \$50,000 or more must be made through the formal solicitation process. The RFP “serves to promote fair and just competition while allowing the procuring entity the flexibility in evaluation through weighted criteria, in contrast to competitive bids that are awarded on price alone.” (*National Institute of Governmental Purchasing*) The RFP is the preferred method when specifications are either 1) not clearly defined or 2) also include service related elements such as installation and/or support. In general, the RFP process is longer than other types of solicitations because it involves an (often lengthy) evaluation process that may include vendor presentations and extensive negotiation.

- The CCSD end-user (school/department) notifies Procurement Services of the good/service needed and provides specifications.
- Procurement Staff will work with the end-user to prepare the RFP document for the particular product or service. During this development stage, the committee responsible for evaluating the responses to the RFP is usually selected.
- An announcement of the RFP is then sent to prospective vendors, usually via fax or email and is posted to the CCSD Current Solicitations website and advertised on local public educational TV stations.
- The RFP is typically open for solicitation or “on the street” for two weeks (10 business days). During this time there may be a pre-proposal conference and a question and answer period. All questions and answers are published on the CCSD website for equal access to all vendors.
- The due date/time of the RFP marks the “closing” of the window for submitting proposals and no further information is revealed at that time. The non-cost portion of the vendor response is submitted separate from the cost proposal to ensure that price does not affect the non-cost scoring portion of the process. There is no public opening and reading of prices as with an invitation to bid



# PROCUREMENT SERVICES

## Competitive Solicitation Process

### **Request for Proposal (continued)**

- The purchasing agent begins the RFP evaluation process by tabulating vendor responses, while simultaneously checking for responsiveness and contacting references.
- The evaluation committee typically has several evaluation meetings to review and grade each vendor response. Responses are scored consistently against the specifications, requirements and evaluation criteria published in the RFP document. This step may include clarification of vendor information and may include interviews or demonstrations.
- Oral presentations may be requested during the evaluation process.
- Vendors scoring at least 70% of the possible non-cost points advance to the next phase of evaluation.
- Cost is evaluated following completion of all non-cost scoring. Vendors that make it to this phase may be sent a request for Best and Final Offer (BAFO) where they are allowed to improve their offer by cutting costs, adding services, or some combination of both.
- The evaluation committee signs a consensus form recommending a vendor(s) for award. The recommendation is then sent to the Board of Education if applicable or awarded and listed on CCSD website for review.



# PROCUREMENT SERVICES

## Competitive Solicitation Process

### Rejection of a Proposal

The failure of an offeror to observe and follow the instructions and conditions of a Request for Proposal can constitute grounds for rejection of a proposal and/or removal from the list of offerors. CCSD Procurement Services reserves the right to reject any and all offers submitted in response to any solicitation document, to reject any portion thereof, to accept portions of the offer from several offerors, or to waive any minor irregularity. CCSD Procurement Services reserves the right to award a solicitation under the most beneficial economic terms for the CCSD.

### Common causes for proposal rejection:

- Any proposal received after the designated time, as determined by the official date/time stamp in Procurement Services, will be deemed late and will not be considered by the CCSD. The use of faxed or emailed proposals is discouraged and every effort should be made by the offeror to deliver the hard copy of the proposal prior to the designated date and time. **If proposals are faxed or emailed, the original hard copy of the proposal must be received by Procurement Services the next business day following receipt of the fax. The hard copy will serve as the legal document and any changes made on the faxed or emailed copy must show on the hard copy.** The CCSD Procurement Services fax number is 770.426.3371.
- Proposals containing provisions for late charges, whether designated as interest charges or otherwise, will not be considered for an award. Offerors are instructed to refrain from presenting any such provisions, as it may be grounds to consider the proposal disqualified and, therefore, rejected. The vendor must initial such changes prior to submitting an offer to CCSD.
- Procurement Services generally requires a minimum of thirty (30) days to evaluate proposals for award. Therefore, those that limit the acceptance period to less than thirty (30) days may be rejected. When it is determined that a time period other than thirty (30) days is appropriate, the solicitation document will so indicate.
- Failure on the part of the offeror to submit requested samples within the time specified.
- Failure on the part of the offeror to provide any information requested by the deadline indicated throughout the evaluation process. It is the vendor's responsibility to ensure timely receipt of all requested information.
- The addition by the offeror of price escalator clauses, minimum order requirements, or other additional pricing terms not included in the terms and conditions of the solicitation document.
- Failure to propose in accordance with an addendum.
- The proposal contains terms and conditions, which are in conflict with the solicitation or CCSD regulations.



# PROCUREMENT SERVICES

## Competitive Solicitation Process

### **PROTEST OF AN AWARD OR DECISION TO AWARD**

Any bidder or offeror may protest the award or decision to award a bid/proposal/quote by submitting a protest in writing to the Cobb County School District, Director of Procurement Services, or a designee no later than ten (10) working days after Board approval of the award or the date of written award letters, whichever occurs first. Any potential bidder or offeror who desires to protest an award or decision on a sole source or emergency purchase shall submit such protest in the same manner.

The written protest shall include the basis for the protest and the relief sought. The Director of Procurement Services, along with the Deputy Chief Financial Officer and the Chief Financial Officer, shall issue a decision in writing within ten (10) working days of the receipt of the protest, stating the reason for the action taken. This decision shall be final unless the bidder or offeror appeals within ten (10) working days of receipt of the written decision to the Superintendent of the Cobb County School District, his designee, or the Cobb County Board of Education.



# PROCUREMENT SERVICES

## Exceptions to Full & Open Competition

**Procurement Services recognizes the following situations which necessitate exceptions to full and open competition through competitive solicitation:**

**Sole/Single Source Purchase**— When supplies or services are readily available from one responsible source. Use of this authority may be appropriate in situations such as the following, (the examples are not intended to be all-inclusive and do not constitute authority in and of themselves):

- When there is a reasonable basis to conclude that the minimum needs can best be satisfied by unique supplies or services readily available from one source with unique capabilities.
- The existence of limited rights in data, patent rights, copyrights, or secret processes; the control of basic raw material; or similar circumstances make the supplies and services available from one source.
- When purchasing utility services (gas, electric power, etc.), circumstances may dictate that only one supplier can furnish the service.
- When the Superintendent or designee has determined in accordance with a program for standardization or continuity that it is in the best interest of CCSD to limit purchases to specified makes and models of equipment and parts to satisfy needs for additional units or replacement items.
- Prior to purchase, schools/departments must submit a “Sole/Single Source Justification” form to Procurement Services including the following information:
  - Explain why this is the only product or service that can meet the need of the purchasing agency.
  - Explain why this vendor is the only practical available source from which to obtain this product or service. Include any documentation from the manufacturer or publisher to support the sole source status.
  - Describe what efforts were made to conduct a negotiation to get the best price, delivery, warranty and payment terms for the Cobb County School District. Procurement Services reserves the right to negotiate further with the vendor for discounts, best value, etc.



# PROCUREMENT SERVICES

## Exceptions to Full & Open Competition

### **Exceptions to Full & Open Competition (continued):**

**Emergency Requirement** -- Emergency Requirement can be cited when the need for supplies or services is of such unusual and compelling urgency that the school or the school system would be seriously injured unless it is permitted to limit the number of sources from which to solicit bids or proposals. Use of this authority applies in those situations where delay in award would result in serious injury, financial or other, to CCSD. The Director of Procurement Services shall approve use of this exception, upon recommendation by the division administrator of the user department. It is the customer's responsibility to gain the appropriate approval.

**Academic Prerogative** – Academic Prerogative can be cited when contracted services or academic materials, such as books, posters, displays, games or art materials are needed for compatibility/continuity with existing curriculum programs or to meet state/federal requirements. Academic materials can be selected from a source (such as a catalogue) at the discretion of a teaching professional in the performance of teaching duties. Contracted staff development/professional learning services, including training and consultative services, can be selected from a source identified as providing the expertise and availability on the particular topic at the discretion of the Director of Professional Learning, Chief School Leadership Officer or Superintendent to provide training to teachers and other certified staff members. Additionally, contracted services for guest performers to provide performances, workshops and/or other instructional services for the Performing Arts Magnet School(s) and feeder schools for the Performing Arts Magnet(s) can be selected from a source identified as providing the expertise and availability on the particular topic at the discretion of the Performing Arts Magnet School(s) principal(s). No special authority is necessary, unless the Director of Procurement Services challenges a purchasing action as an abuse of this exception. The Chief Academic Officer, along with the Chief Financial Officer, shall be the determining authorities for such a challenge.

**Construction Projects** – All improvements to District property must comply with Administrative Rules FJA, FEG, and FEGC. This includes any improvements to existing Cobb County School District (District) property, whether new construction, modification, alteration or renovation, either interior or exterior in nature.



# PROCUREMENT SERVICES

## How to be Successful

### **Tips for successfully doing business with the Cobb County School District:**

- **Complete a vendor application.** You will find a vendor application on the CCSD Purchasing Home Page. Instructions for submitting are included. Notify CCSD of changes in contact information.
- **Check the CCSD Current Solicitations website regularly** to stay aware of business opportunities with the District.
- **Read carefully!** Each solicitation contains complete information regarding the product/service sought, date/time to submit responses and how the solicitation will be awarded (i.e. for bids—award will be to the lowest priced responsible, responsive bidder meeting specifications and requirements; RFPs will include evaluation criteria detailing how your response will be scored.)
- **Provide all information requested and in the format requested.**
  - References— We DO check references. Provide all contact information requested, especially fax numbers and email addresses as we prefer to have your references respond in writing.
  - Samples—Provide samples when and if they are requested.
  - Pricing—Provide pricing in the format requested. Procurement must be able to analyze prices on an equivalent basis across all participating vendors. For example, if pricing is requested per carton of twelve items, pricing should be provided as requested rather than per each item, etc.
  - If the solicitation you are responding to requires additional pages, clearly label the information provided including the bid/RFP section name and number on each. Use tabs, table of contents, etc. to aid in organizing your response to lengthy, complex solicitations.
- **Ask questions!** Should you have questions concerning a particular solicitation, submit them in the manner stipulated in each bid/quote/RFP document. **Communicate only with the designated Procurement Services staff member during the solicitation process.**
- **Submit your response on time!** Allow plenty of time for your completed submission to arrive before the deadline indicated. The official time of receipt is the time reflected on the CCSD Procurement Services time stamp. Late submissions will not be accepted.
- **Follow-up!**
  - It is the vendor's responsibility to ensure timely receipt of all information. Vendors are encouraged to call, email, etc. to confirm receipt of information.
  - If your company is not successful on a particular solicitation, follow-up to determine why. Our files are open for public inspection and our staff is happy to answer questions.