

WORKING WITH BEAUFORT COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT



VENDOR HANDBOOK

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Dear Vendor:

Thank you for your interest in the Beaufort 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. Full and open competition is the basis of our purchasing program as well as abiding by the policies and procedures mandated by the Beaufort County Board of Education and all applicable Federal and State regulations.

As mentioned, this publication is an overview of BCSD Procurement. Understanding this information will increase the likelihood of doing business with the District. It has been our experience that there is a positive correlation between the vendors that understand public purchasing principles and the vendors that are awarded contracts. Our team looks forward to establishing a mutually beneficial business relationship with your organization.

Please contact us at 843-322-2349 if we can provide any additional information not included in this manual.

The Procurement Department

Purpose of the Vendor's Handbook

The purpose of the Vendor Handbook is to provide information to prospective vendors that will make doing business with the Beaufort County School District a positive, effective, and efficient process.

BCSD 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 BCSD 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, BCSD Procurement Code or our process. Your feedback is welcomed and appreciated.

CODE OF ETHICS

The Beaufort County School District (BCSD) Procurement Department recognizes Public Procurement as a profession and adopts the Code of Ethics promulgated by the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing (NIGP).

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

The BCSD Procurement Department recognizes that employees of the 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.

It is the policy of the BCSD Procurement 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.

PURCHASING REGULATIONS

The Procurement Department is committed to compliance with BCSD Board Policy through the application of BCSD Procurement Code as published on the Procurement Department website located at <https://www.beaufortschools.net/about-us/departments/finance/purchasing-procurement>.

STAFF INFORMATION

Department Phone: 843-322-2349

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<u>Title</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Email</u>
Director of Budget and Procurement	Jennifer Hamblin	843-322-5928	Jennifer.Hamblin@beaufort.k12.sc.us
Procurement Coordinator	Kaylee Yinger	843-322-2349	Kaylee.Yinger@beaufort.k12.sc.us
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THE PURCHASING PROCESS

Procurement facilitates the purchasing process between BCSD schools/departments and vendors according to all applicable laws, policies and regulations. The purchasing cycle begins when a department (end-user) presents a purchasing need to Procurement. As the subject matter expert, the end-user is responsible for writing the specifications which detail the need or desire. Jointly, the end-user and procurement representative work to finalize the Invitation for Bid/ Request for Quote/ Request for Proposal document for solicitation. Responses are evaluated against specifications by both the end user and procurement staff. Procurement will issue an "intent to award" letter to the successful vendor(s). Following this letter, the award is made, and the end user is able to place orders per the terms and conditions of the contract.

What We Purchase

BCSD 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, and is not limited to, food items, office supplies, paper products, sports equipment, band instruments, school buses, technology items, pest control, outsourced services, custodial supplies and much more. The District website, <https://www.beaufortschools.net/>, contains a link for current and expired Procurement solicitations. Located at the top right of the page, click on "Community", "Working With The District" and then "Bids and Awards." The BCSD website includes a list of awarded contracts that should prove very informative for potential vendors.

How We Purchase

BCSD schools and departments make purchases using one of two methods:

1) Purchase Order

Each school/department enters a Requisition into the BCSD online financial system. After internal approval is received and all supporting documentation is forwarded to Procurement, for the requisition to be converted to a Purchase Order. Once printed it is the ordering department's responsibility to send the Purchase Order to the vendor via fax/e-mail.

2) Procurement Card

The Procurement Card is a VISA card issued by a local bank. Each school and most departments within BCSD have a procurement card to make transactions for goods and services. The cards are restricted by dollar limits and by Merchant Category Code (MCC) codes. The MCC code assigned to a business is controlled by the VISA authorities, which assign the codes by business type. Our cards restrict purchases from MCC codes that do not offer goods and services to be used by a Pre-K - 12 school system.

Except for purchases made in accordance with other provisions of BCSD Procurement Code, all purchases for goods or services with District funding shall be based on competitive solicitations as detailed below. The complete BCSD Procurement Code can be viewed by accessing the

District website located at <https://www.beaufortschools.net/about-us/departments/finance/purchasing-procurement>.

Matrix of Procurement Requirements and Competition Thresholds			
Type of Purchase	Process	Criteria	Approval Authority
Small Purchase up to \$10,000.00	Requisition or P-Card No quotes required	Supplies, material, airline tickets, services	Principal/Department Head and Procurement Coordinator
Small Purchase \$10,000.01–\$25,000.00	Requisition or P-Card 3 written quotes	Supplies, material, services	Principal/Department Head and Procurement Coordinator
Purchases \$25,000.01 - \$100,000.00	Requisition or P-Card Request for Quotes, Must be advertised Contact Procurement Office	Supplies, material, services	Principal / Department Head and Procurement Coordinator / may require Board approval
Purchases greater than \$100,000.00	Requisition or P-Card IFB / RFP Must be advertised Contact Procurement Office	Supplies, material, services	Principal / Department Head and Procurement Coordinator / may require Board approval
Sole Source	Use of single source with no competition	No other known source - requires documentation	Procurement Coordinator and Chief Financial Officer
Emergency Procurement	No competitive process	Threat to normal operations or to the health, safety or welfare of persons or property	Procurement Coordinator and Chief Financial Officer

PROCUREMENT SPENDING LIMITS APPLY TO ALL CONTRACTS OVER \$10,000.00

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT PRIMARILY UTILIZES THREE COMPETITIVE SOLICITATION METHODS:

1. Request for Quote
2. Invitation for Bid
3. Request for Proposal

1. REQUEST FOR QUOTE (RFQ)

Internal policies and procedures allow for each school/department to make purchases at the local level within the parameters described under the competition thresholds. Procurement must be involved in any competitive purchase over \$25,000. Listed below are some bullet points to know about the RFQ.

- The BCSD end-user (school/department) notifies the Procurement Department of the goods or services needed and provides specifications.
- Procurement Staff works with the end-user to prepare an RFQ for the requested product or service.
- The RFQ is then sent to prospective vendors, via fax or email, advertised through South Carolina Business Opportunities (SCBO) and is posted on the BCSD website.
- Vendors are required to complete the RFQ form(s) and submit to Procurement 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 and responsible offeror(s) that meet specifications and requirements in the RFQ. Once the award has been issued, the school or department is able to proceed with the purchase.
- Quotes can be written with firm pricing up to a year and may or may not be available to be renewed annually.

2. INVITATION FOR BID (IFB)

Purchases totaling \$100,000 or more must be made through either a formal Invitation for Bid or Request for Proposal process. The bidder should review instructions and conditions of the IFB and include all information and signatures as required. The bid documents must be returned to Procurement **before** the time and date indicated for the bid opening as determined by the Procurement Coordinator or designee. Listed below are some bullet points to know about the IFB.

- The BCSD end-user (school/department) notifies the Procurement Department of the goods or service needed and provides specifications.
- Procurement staff works with the end-user to prepare an IFB for the requested product or service.
- An announcement of the IFB is then sent to prospective vendors, usually via fax or email and is posted to the BCSD website and advertised through SCBO.
- The IFB is typically open for solicitation for a minimum of 7 calendar days. Complex bids may be advertised up to five weeks (25 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 BCSD 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, the Procurement Department 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, the Procurement

Department issues an award letter and/or contract to the vendor(s). Once the award has been issued, the school or department is 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. This is the bidder who submits the lowest price, whose bid meets the specifications, terms, and conditions set forth in the IFB, 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. Awards will be made in the best interest of BCSD.
- 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 BCSD. Multi-term contracts may have a base term with options up to five years total.

REJECTION OF A BID

The failure of a bidder to observe and follow the instructions and conditions of a solicitation can constitute grounds for rejection of a bid and/or removal from the list of bidders. The BCSD Procurement Department 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. The BCSD Procurement Department reserves the right to award a solicitation under the most beneficial economic terms for the BCSD.

Common causes for bid rejection

- Any bid received after the designated time, as determined by the Procurement Coordinator, will be deemed late and will not be accepted by the BCSD. The use of faxed or emailed bids is not acceptable unless stated otherwise in the solicitation. Every effort should be made by the bidder to deliver the required hard copy of the bid prior to the designated date and time.
- 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 Procurement Department generally requires a minimum of thirty (30) days to evaluate bids for award. Those bidders 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, that the information will be provided in the solicitation documentation.
- 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. This includes a bid containing terms and conditions which are in conflict with the solicitation or BCSD regulations.
- Failure to bid in accordance with an addendum.

3. REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

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 evaluation process that may include vendor presentations and extensive negotiation. Listed below are some bullet points to know about the RFP.

- The BCSD end-user (school/department) notifies the Procurement Department of the goods/services needed and provides specifications.
- Procurement staff works with the end-user to prepare the RFP document for the requested product or service. During this development stage, the committee responsible for evaluating the response to the RFP will be selected.
- An announcement of the RFP is then sent to prospective vendors, usually via fax or email and is posted to the BCSD website and advertised on South Carolina Business Opportunities (SCBO).
- The RFP is typically open for solicitation for a minimum 7 calendar days. Complex bids may be advertised up to five weeks (25 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 BCSD 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 technical (non-cost) portion of the vendor response is submitted separate from the cost proposal to ensure that price does not affect the technical scoring portion of the process. Price is not the sole determining factor in the RFP solicitation process, therefore no public opening and reading of prices is required.
- The procurement staff begins the RFP evaluation process by tabulating vendor responses, while simultaneously checking for responsiveness and contacting references.
- The evaluation committee has several evaluation meetings to review and grade each vendor response. Responses are scored 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.
- Vendors scoring at least 80% of the possible technical points advance to the next phase of evaluation unless state/federal evaluation rules mandate otherwise.
- Cost is evaluated following completion of all technical 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.
- Each member of the evaluation committee must sign and date individually an Evaluation Form recommending a vendor(s) for award. The recommendation is then sent to the Board of Education if applicable or awarded and listed on BCSD website and sent to vendors via email who responded to the solicitation.

REJECTION OF A PROPOSAL

The failure of an offeror to observe and follow the instructions and conditions of an RFP can constitute grounds for rejection of a proposal and/or removal from the list of offerors. The BCSD Procurement Department 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. The Procurement Department reserves the right to award a solicitation under the most beneficial economic terms for the BCSD.

Common causes for proposal rejection

- Any proposal received after the designated time, as determined by the Procurement Coordinator, will be deemed late and will not be accepted by BCSD. The use of faxed or emailed proposals is not acceptable unless stated otherwise in the solicitation. Every effort should be made by the bidder to deliver the required hard copy of the proposal prior to the designated date and time.
- 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 Procurement Department generally requires a minimum of thirty (30) days to evaluate proposals for award. Those bidders 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, that the information will be provided in the solicitation documentation.
- 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 bidder of price escalator clauses, minimum order requirements, or other additional pricing terms not included in the terms and conditions of the solicitation document. This includes a bid containing terms and conditions which are in conflict with the solicitation or BCSD regulations.
- Failure to propose in accordance with an addendum.

PROTEST OF AN AWARD OR DECISION TO AWARD

A prospective bidder, offeror, contractor, or subcontractor who is aggrieved in connection with a solicitation shall protest to the Procurement Coordinator in writing within fifteen (15) days of the date of issuance of the Invitation For Bids or Requests for Proposals or other solicitation documents, whichever is applicable, or any amendment, if the amendment is at issue.

Any actual bidder, offeror, contractor or subcontractor who wishes to protest the process or intent to

award or award of a contract shall notify the Procurement Coordinator in writing of its their intent to protest within seven (7) business days of the date that award or notification of intent to award, whichever is earlier, is posted. Any potential bidder/offeror who has issued an intent to protest to the Procurement Coordinator may issue the actual protest within fifteen (15) calendar days of the date of award or notification of intent to award, whichever is earlier.

Any actual or prospective bidder, offeror, contractor, or subcontractor who is wishes to protest the intended award or award of a contract deemed Sole Source or Emergency Procurement shall notify the Procurement Coordinator in writing of its intent to protest within five (5) business days of the date that award or notification of intent to award, whichever is earlier. Any actual or prospective bidder, offeror, contractor, or subcontractor who has issued an intent to protest to the Procurement Coordinator may issue the actual protest within fifteen (15) calendar days of the date of award or notification of intent to award, whichever is earlier.

The written protest shall set forth the grounds of the protest and the relief requested with enough particularity to give notice of the issues to be decided. The protest must be received by the Procurement Coordinator within the required time of protest.

CONSTRUCTION / CAPITAL PROJECTS

All new construction and improvements to District property must comply with the BCSD Procurement Code and in accordance with the SC School Facilities Planning & Construction Guide prepared by the Office of School Facilities Planning. This includes any improvements to existing Beaufort County School District property, whether new construction, modification, alteration or renovation, either interior or exterior in nature. All Construction/Capital Projects with an estimated cost exceeding \$100,000 must be formally solicited by the Procurement Department. BCSD generally adheres to the CM-at-risk construction delivery method in compliance with all applicable state school board rules, and state and federal laws.

Procurement Services Recognizes the Following Situations Which Necessitate Exceptions to Full and Open Competition through Competitive Solicitation:

Sole/Single Source Procurement - When supplies or services are readily available from only 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 BCSD 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 documentation to the Procurement Department to include 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 Beaufort County School District. The Procurement Department reserves the right to negotiate further with the vendor for discounts, best value, etc.
- Provide a letter from the vendor confirming sole source status.
- Review and approval is obtained from the Chief Financial Officer.

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.

The Chief Financial Officer shall approve use of this exception, upon recommendation by the division administrator of the user department and the Procurement Coordinator.

Exemptions

The Board of Education may exempt specific goods or services from the purchasing procedures herein required or withdraw any exemptions provided for in this section. The District adopts the exemptions granted by the State Budget and Control Board both present and future. The following exemptions are granted by the Board of Education and do not require competitive pricing when it is not advantageous or practical:

1. Copyrighted Educational Materials to include, but not be limited to:
 - a) Books, dictionaries, textbooks, newspapers, diplomas
 - b) Professional journals, technical pamphlets, periodicals, subscriptions
 - c) Educational films, filmstrips, slides and transparencies
 - d) Video tapes, cassettes, DVDs

- e) Standardized testing materials
 - f) Educational kits and replacement parts required for instruction (STEM, PLTW, ROTC, Health Sciences)
 - g) Instructional Materials required in a course of study
2. Copyrighted Technology Materials to include, but not be limited to:
 - a) Computer assisted instructional materials, interactive video programs
 - b) CD-ROM documents, data bases
 - c) Site Licenses, maintenance contracts, upgrades and related information, materials for District adopted instructional software, including site licenses, or other support services or related information/materials only available or provided by the software provider
 - d) License agreements/renewals for computer software after such software has been competitively bid as required by the Code and additional software features/options that are only available by the software provider.
 3. Medical and/or Psychological Services to include, but not be limited to:
 - a) Licensed/certified medical doctors, physicians, surgeons, dentists, pathologist, nurses, psychiatrists, psychologists, school psychologists, behaviorists, counselors, optometrists, dentists, etc.
 - b) Hospital. medical clinics and clinical services, occupational and physical therapy, orientation and mobility
 - c) Speech, language, audiological and related services
 - d) Hepatitis B and other vaccines
 - e) Medical devises required for instruction
 - f) Long-term medical or educational organizations and treatment services
 4. Governmental Services to include, but not be limited to:
 - a) Services and supplies provided by the Federal government, State agencies, county, city or town governments, and special purpose districts
 - b) Payments of taxes, social security, annuities, credit unions
 - c) School Resource Officer services
 - d) Professional artists utilized by S.C. Arts Commission
 5. Educational Services to include, but not be limited to:
 - a) Contractual, cooperative agreements, services and supplies for provision of services to students including foreign teachers
 - b) Tuitions paid to institutions of higher education
 - c) Evaluation services and expense of visiting committees such
 - d) Consultants for evaluation of academic programs
 6. Policy and Legal Services to include, but not be limited to:
 - a) Attorney services (subject to Board approval), court recorders, expert witness services, bond rating services and costs associated with issuance or refinancing of bonds.
 - b) Certified Public Accountants (subject to Board Approval)
 - c) Legislative consultant (subject to Board approval)
 - d) Finance Advisors, investment management, brokerage services (subject to Board approval)
 - e) Insurance coverage, both primary and reinsurance coverage
 - f) Board governance consultants and facilitators
 - g) Security Underwrites and similar services provided by professionals regulated by the National

Association of Securities Dealers (“NASD”).

7. Staff Development to include, but not be limited to:
 - a) Training provided by consultants, certified teachers/trainers or District personnel
 - b) Training materials secured or prepared for instructional purposes
 - c) Workshop, conference, seminar registrations
 - d) Travel
 - e) Training facility rentals

8. Student Services to include, but not be limited to:
 - a) Electronic and printed exams, tests, testing materials, including scoring services and materials
 - b) Canine drug and/or weapon detection services and related support services
 - c) Homebound services and home visits
 - d) Instruction provided by certified teachers
 - e) Interpreters, interpreter services, tutors
 - f) Employment sourcing services for instructional staff identified as critical needs

9. Utilities and Energy Expenses to include, but not be limited to:
 - a) Fuel, propane, natural gas
 - b) Oil company credit card purchases of gas, oil or fluids
 - c) Electric/power services,
 - d) Water/sewer services and related costs

10. Communication Expenses to include, but not limited to:
 - a) Local & long-distance telecommunication services
 - b) Telecommunication equipment, upgrades, maintenance & repair contracts
 - c) Lease of imbedded telephone systems
 - d) Cell phones & services
 - e) Cable & satellite TV
 - f) Internet connectivity

11. Refunds to include, but not be limited to, refunds of health insurance, earnest monies, bid securities, or other funds temporarily entrusted to the District

12. One-Of-A-Kind and proprietary items to include, but not be limited to:
 - a) Paintings, sculptures, antiques, art reproductions, historical artifacts, other rare items
 - b) Scientific specimens, skeletal and taxidermy mounts, models, fossils, minerals, rocks, etc.
 - c) Previously owned (*used*) vehicles, equipment and instruments (Subject to approval by the Chief Procurement Officer)
 - d) Band Uniforms
 - e) Repairs and Services to equipment by the original installer

13. Emergency Repairs to include, but not limited to:
 - a) Repairs to life safety, fire and security systems.
 - b) Repairs to buses or other vehicles used to transport students or staff on District sponsored trips.
 - c) Environmental remediation services where the issues giving rise to remedial services disrupt the educational process
 - d) Repairs required that otherwise threaten the health or safety of employees, students, or community.

14. Items Purchased for Resale

15. Livestock, Feed and Veterinary Supplies and Services

16. Mail and Delivery Services, Postage

17. Perishable Foods to include, but not limited to:
 - a) Milk, Meats, Fish and Eggs
 - b) Catering services
 - c) Food items for nutritional instructional classes, after school programs and community schools.

18. Travel Expenses for Staff and Students to include, but not be limited to:
 - a) Airline, car rental, bus, train, parking, taxis, etc.
 - b) Hotel accommodations
 - c) Meals/allowances
 - d) Conference/seminar and other registration/fees

19. Professional Dues & Memberships

20. Property Services to include, but not be limited to:
 - a) Appraisals and related services
 - b) Leasing of public parking lots, lecture halls, theaters, arenas, athletic facilities, recreational areas, etc. For District sponsored events.

21. Advertising

22. Pupil Activity Funds or Other Trust or Agency Funds. (Except when used to procure capital equipment, site improvements, construction services, architects and other facility related services).

23. Professional Artists to include, but not be limited to:
 - a) Writers and poets
 - b) Theater groups
 - c) Craftsmen and folk artist

24. Clergy Services

25. Grant Specified Equipment and Services:

Purchase of grant specified, and approved equipment, subcontracts and consultants required for the successful completion of the grant project and where competitive bidding is not required or practical (subject to Chief Procurement Officer approval)

26. Confidential Goods and Services:

Goods and services of a confidential/sensitive nature that would cause injury to students, staff and/or District if procured through public solicitation (subject to Superintendent approval)

27. Procurements by the District through a cooperative purchase where the public procurement unit or external procurement activity administering the cooperative purchase complied with the requirements of the South Carolina Procurement Consolidated Code, or such other procurement code approved by the Office of General Services of the State Budget and Control Board pursuant to S.C.Code Ann. § 11-35-70 (Supp. 2000).

28. Budget and Control Board Exemptions:

The District also adopts the exemptions granted by the State Budget and Control Board, both present and future.

SMALL AND MINORITY BUSINESS PROGRAM

Statement of Policy

It is the policy of the Beaufort County School District that discrimination against businesses on the basis of race, color, national origin, and gender is prohibited. No person shall be denied the benefit of, or otherwise discriminated against, on the grounds of race, color, national origin or gender in connection with the award and/or performance of any contract or modification of a contract between a vender or contractor and which contract is paid or is to be paid for, in whole or part, with monetary appropriations of BCSD. Further, it is the policy of BCSD to encourage and promote on an inclusionary basis contracting opportunities for all business, without regard to race, color, national origin or gender. It is expected that all firms seeking to do business with the Beaufort County School District will comply with this policy.

M/WBE Compliance

Potential bidders must demonstrate their process for contracting or utilizing businesses as subcontractors or suppliers for work on projects undertaken is open to businesses regardless of race, gender or ethnicity, by fulfilling one (1) of three (3) alternative eligible bidder categories.

1. Documentation of prior M/WBE on projects undertaken in South Carolina during the previous two (2) years at the level of availability.
2. Documentation of prior good faith outreach efforts on all projects undertaken in South Carolina during the previous two (2) years.

3. Commitment to future good faith outreach efforts in all projects undertaken in South Carolina.

On eligible projects that equal or exceed five million dollars in value, potential bidders are required to make a good faith effort to enter into a joint venture or Mentor/Protégé arrangement at the prime contractor level which includes at least one (1) certified minority- and/or woman-owned firm.

- Companies involved in joint venture Mentor/Protégé arrangements must be of a different race or gender ownership.
- Each eligible bidder shall, with each bid, submission on an eligible contract:
 1. A complete and signed subcontractor plan. Eligible bidders who submit bid proposals which fail to utilize minority- and/or woman-owned business enterprises at a level consistent with availability, must submit documentation detailing their “good faith outreach efforts” to utilize minority- and/or woman owned firms.
 2. Written documentation demonstrating the eligible bidder’s good faith efforts to identify, contract with, or utilize businesses, including certified M/WBEs, as sub-contractors or suppliers on the eligible project.
- Acceptable good faith effort documentation:
 1. The eligible bidder contacted the Procurement Department, other private sector and government entities, or M/WBEs organizations, to identify available businesses to work on the eligible bidder project, including minority-and woman- owned firms.
 2. The eligible bidder placed notices of opportunity for minority-and woman-owned firms to perform subcontracting work on the eligible project in newspapers, trade journals and other relevant publications specifically targeted to M/WBEs or communicated such notices or opportunities via the Internet or by other available media.
 3. The eligible bidder submitted invitations to bid for work on the eligible project to qualified businesses, including minority-and woman-owned firms.
 4. The eligible bidder included in such notices and invitations a full disclosure of the criteria upon which bids, proposals or quotes would be evaluated, as well as contact information for inquiries, submissions, or requests to review any necessary bid documents.
 5. The eligible bidder promptly responded to inquiries, provided necessary physical access and time for all interested businesses to fully review all necessary bid documents, and provided information, to allow all interested businesses to prepare bids and quotes, regardless of race, gender or ethnicity.
 6. The eligible bidder considered, hired, or otherwise utilized qualified and available businesses for an eligible project, including minority-and woman-owned firms.
 7. For each business which contacted or was contacted by the eligible bidder regarding sub-contracting or services on the eligible project, the eligible bidder shall maintain all written documents reflecting such contact, including bids, quotes and proposals.

Subcontractor Participation

Beaufort County School District, through its contract documents, encourages contractors to utilize minority subcontractors on their projects.

A prime contractor must identify M/WBE utilization expenditures to certified M/WBE subcontractors that perform a commercially useful function in the work of the contract. An M/WBE subcontractor is considered to perform a commercially useful function when it is responsible for the execution of a distinct element of the work of a contract for which the M/WBE has the skill and expertise and carries out its responsibilities by actually performing, managing and supervising the work involved.

Tips for Successfully Doing Business with Beaufort County School District

1. **Check the BCSD website regularly** for current solicitations to stay aware of business opportunities with the District.
2. **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.)
3. **Provide all information requested, in the format requested.**
 - References — The district does check references. Provide all contact information requested, especially fax numbers and email addresses so they references may respond in writing.
 - Samples — Provide samples when and if they are requested.
 - Pricing — Provide pricing in the format requested. The Procurement Department 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 requires additional pages, clearly label the information provided including the IFB/RFP section name and number on each additional page. Use tabs, table of contents, etc. to aid in organizing your response to lengthy, complex solicitations.
4. **Ask questions.** Should you have questions concerning a particular solicitation, submit them in the manner stipulated in each RFQ/IFB/RFP document. Communicate only with the designated Procurement staff member during the solicitation process.
5. **Submit your response on time.** Allow plenty of time for your completed submission to arrive before the deadline indicated. Late submissions will not be accepted.
6. **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 bid documents with the Procurement staff.

- If your company is not successful on a particular solicitation, follow-up. Our files are open for public inspection and our staff is happy to answer questions.