Engage, Inspire, Prepare

How to Do Business

with Paulding County School District

Vendor Handbook

Updated March 2026

Engage, Inspire, Prepare

Purpose of the Handbook

The purpose of the Vendor Handbook is to provide information to prospective vendors that will make doing business with Paulding County School District a professional, effective, and efficient process by providing clarity on current policies and procedures used for procuring goods and services in support of the PCSD vision and educational goals.

PCSD 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 PCSD purchasing practices, it does provide the basic principles of PCSD procurement methods.

Feel free to call or email with any questions pertaining to this handbook, PCSD Purchasing Policies or processes. We desire and appreciate your feedback.

Engage, Inspire, Prepare

Dear Vendor:

Welcome to the Paulding County School District (PCSD) Procurement Services Department's community of business associates. You will find our purchasing operations are similar to those encountered in many other government organizations. Full and open competition is the foundation of our purchasing program and we abide by the policy and procedures mandated by the PCSD Board of Education and the applicable State and Federal regulations and laws in all purchasing actions.

This guide is intended to provide an overview of how you can do business with the District. For more detailed information about our Department, we invite you to visit our website at www.paulding.k12.ga.us and go to the Purchasing link under the Departments drop down menu. The site provides information about open solicitations, instructions for becoming a vendor, and other policies and procedures.

We look forward to establishing a mutually beneficial business relationship with your organization. If we can be of further assistance please contact us at 770-443-8000 or via email to purchasing@paulding.k12.ga.us.

Regards,

Cole Crowder
Director of Procurement

Engage, Inspire, Prepare

About Paulding County School District

Paulding County School District is the eleventh largest within the State of Georgia School Systems serving approximately 32,000 students. PCSD has thirty-five (35) schools – 19 elementary, 10 middle, 5 high schools as well as the Paulding College and Career Academy and New Hope Education Center. Additionally, the District has seven (7) auxiliary or support locations. You are invited to learn more about our District by visiting our website at http://www.paulding.k12.ga.us/.

Updated March 2026

Engage, Inspire, Prepare

What We Believe

It is the policy of Paulding County School District to make purchases in such a way as to provide the best quality goods and/or services in the most efficient and economical manner to the District.

Our District Mission:

Engage. Inspire. Prepare.

Our District Vision:

The vision of the Paulding County School District is to prepare ALL students for success today and tomorrow.

Beliefs:

- We believe preparing students is our first priority.
- We believe in fostering a culture of high expectations in student achievement and personal development.
- We believe all students are inspired to learn when provided rigorous and relevant instruction and positive relationships.
- We believe students thrive best when provided a safe, challenging, and healthy environment.
- We believe in the use of collaborative learning communities where best practices are partnered with data driven decisions.
- We believe in engaging all stakeholders in student success.

Updated March 2026

Engage, Inspire, Prepare

Contact Information

PCSD Procurement Staff and Contact Information

Title	Name	Phone	Email
Director of Procurement	Cole Crowder	7770-443-8000 x 10148	ccrowder@paulding.k12.ga.us
Vendor Compliance Accountant	Jana Flanigan	770-443-8000 X 10130	jflanigan@paulding.k12.ga.us

Department Fax: 770-443-7243

Department Email: Purchasing@paulding.k12.ga.us

Updated March 2026

Engage, Inspire, Prepare

General Purchasing Information

The Purchasing Process

Procurement Services facilitates the purchasing process between PCSD schools/departments and vendors according to all applicable laws, policies, and regulations. The purchasing cycle begins when a school or department (end-user) presents a purchasing need to Procurement Services. 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 award letter to the winning vendor(s). From this letter, the end user is able to place orders per the terms and conditions of the contract.

What We Buy

PCSD has the need for an extensive variety of materials and services to support the educational needs for our children. Examples range from office supplies to school buses, paper goods, custodial supplies, sports equipment, technology items, food items, waste pick-up, outsourced services, and grounds maintenance.

How We Purchase

PCSD schools and departments make most purchases using the following methods:

(1.) Purchase Order (2.) Performance Contract.

Each school/department enters its own Purchase Orders into the PCSD online financial system. After proceeding through the internal approval process, the order is then sent to the vendor via fax or email. The Performance Contract is used to pay for services.

Updated March 2026

Engage, Inspire, Prepare

Purchasing Methodology

All purchases and contracts for goods and services (non-construction) made with budgeted funds, except purchases made under the conditions cited under ***"Exceptions to Solicitation Process***", shall be subject to limits outlined in Board Policy DJED as follows:

Purchase Commitment Amount	Process	Formal Solicitation Issued by Procurement	Legal Notice	Board Approval
$5,000 or less and not already on existing contract	**Use Best Judgement**	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required
If, greater than $5,000 and less than or equal to $20,000 and not already on existing contract	**Two** (2) **written quotes** obtained and kept by the local school or department. Purchases must be reviewed and approved by the principal/department head and documentation must be available for periodic review.	Not Required	Not Required	Not Required
If, greater than $20,000 and less than $100,000 and not already on existing contract	**Request for Quote (RFQ)** issued by Procurement Department with intent to obtain at least three (3) competitive quotes	Required	Notice is posted for at least 3 and up to 30 business days	Reported quarterly as Point of Information (POI)
If, greater than or equal to $100,000 and not already on existing contract	**Formal Invitation for Bid (IFB) or Request for Proposal (RFP)** issued by Procurement Department with intent to obtain at least three (3) competitive quotes.	Required	Notice is posted for at least 5 and up to 30 business days	Board Approval Required

These competitive thresholds apply to aggregate purchases per solicitation; purchases shall not be intentionally divided into smaller units in order to circumvent Board Policy and/or Purchasing Standards and Procedures. The Procurement Department will determine when/if purchased goods and/or services are related.

Note Regarding Purchasing with Federal Funds: Where applicable federal regulations or guidelines conflict with the competitive thresholds established by PCSD, the more restrictive requirements shall apply.

Engage, Inspire, Prepare

Purchasing Methodology

Exceptions to Solicitation Process

1) **Professional Services**

   Contracted professional services including, but not limited to, architectural, engineering, consultative, legal, accounting, software or advisory services can be selected from a source identified as providing the subject matter expertise and availability on a particular topic.

2) **Other Government Sources**

   Items listed on an existing contract or bid by another local, state, or federal agency and utilities regulated by the Georgia Public Service Commission including marketers certified by the Georgia Public Service Commission.

3) **Existing Contract**

   Items that are included on an existing purchase agreement, competitive quotation, bid, proposal, time and material contract, rent, lease, or purchase order.

4) **Academic Prerogative**

   Products and services specific to achieving curriculum and academic standards including textbooks, reference materials, instructional media, teaching aids, testing materials and products, academic software, training, and curriculum based professional services. This includes the use of licensed health and educational professionals utilized in direct or indirect support of student services. In addition, the use of contracted staff development/professional learning and testing services can be selected from a source identified as providing the expertise and availability on the particular topic.

5) **Safety and Security**

   Products and services related to safety and security.

6) **Student Activity**

   Including but not limited to; field trips, charter buses, homecoming, prom, graduation activities, meetings, speakers, hospitality, and events.

Engage, Inspire, Prepare

Purchasing Methodology

Georgia Security and Immigration Compliance

PCSD adheres to requirements set forth in the Georgia Security and Immigration Compliance Act, as Amended by the Illegal Immigration Reform Act of 2011, OCGA 13-10-90, et al. Applicable documents are included in each solicitation released by PCSD Procurement Services and must be properly executed by responding vendors (including notarization) in order to be considered for contract award.

Accessing Upcoming Solicitations

The Procurement Services Department provides information on upcoming solicitations via the PCSD Purchasing webpage under the "Current Solicitation" menu option. This links to the PCSD Euna Procurement webpage, https://pauldingk12.bonfirehub.com/portal/. You must register with Euna Procurement to receive notifications of open solicitations available. Solicitations are also posted on the State of Georgia's Procurement Registry. You must register as a vendor with the state of Georgia to receive e-mail notifications of open solicitations on the Georgia Procurement Registry.

Accessing PCSD Euna Procurement Website

- Go to https://pauldingk12.bonfirehub.com/portal/
- Register as a vendor
- View solicitations
- Submit proposals
- Receive notifications

Accessing Georgia Procurement Registry

The Georgia Procurement Registry is maintained by the Georgia Department of Administrative Services (DOAS). Information on accessing the Georgia Procurement Registry can be found at http://doas.ga.gov/state-purchasing/team-georgia-marketplace/tgm-resources-for-suppliers.

Engage, Inspire, Prepare

Purchasing Methodology

Local Preference

The PCSD Board of Education finds that local suppliers and contractors support the economy of Paulding County, Georgia by employing Paulding County residents, contributing time and resources to local efforts, and by paying taxes to local governments. Therefore, it is a practice of this District that preference be given to local suppliers and contractors as set forth herein. Preferences shall not be given in any solicitation process in which doing so would violate applicable state or federal law, such as for federally funded purchases.

Local Vendor Preference: Price Match

Whenever non-construction purchases are to be made using competitive quotes or invitation for bid (IFB) bids and the most competitive quote or bid was submitted by a non-local supplier or contractor and an otherwise conforming quote or bid was submitted by a local supplier or contractor, as that term is defined herein, whose quote or bid is within two percent 2% or less of the most competitive quote or bid, but not cumulatively greater than $10,000 the District shall notify the local supplier or contractor on the business day following the opening of the quote or bid of the most competitive quote or bid and give the local supplier or contractor three (3) business days to match the quote or bid. Should the local supplier or contractor agree to match the quote or bid, it will be considered by the Superintendent in making his recommendation to the Board of Education.

Whenever non-Construction purchases are to be made using Requests for Proposal and a local business meets the quality standards established for the RFP process, the local business shall be awarded the equivalent of two percent (2%) of the total potential evaluation points for the solicitation. The evaluation and scoring of all proposals shall be conducted in accordance with departmental procedures issued by the Chief Financial Officer or his/her designee. At the sole discretion of the District, the Purchasing Department will validate that a local vendor's proposed product is the same, equal, or better than the lowest responsive and responsible bid if utilizing a local preference in making an award recommendation.

In the event of a tie, the District may utilize "vendor geographic location" in determining the award.

Engage, Inspire, Prepare

Purchasing Methodology

Local Vendor Designation

For the purpose of this policy "local" shall mean any individual, Georgia corporation, Georgia partnership, or other Georgia business entity who, at the time said individual or entity submits a quote or bid to the District, and for a period of twelve (12) months 90 days or more prior thereto, has its principal place of business, from which business is physically conducted, as determined by the District, in Paulding County, Georgia. Determination shall not be based upon a post office box, a leased private mailbox, site trailer, or temporary structure.

The District, in its sole discretion, shall consider all factors that it deems relevant in its determination of whether an individual or entity is local. These factors may include, but shall not be limited to, the following:

1. Whether the individual or entity holds a business license in Paulding County, Georgia;
2. Whether the individual or entity has an office in Paulding County, Georgia;
3. Whether the individual(s) owner is a resident of Paulding County, Georgia;
4. Whether the owner or owners of an entity are residents of Paulding County, Georgia;
5. Whether the individual or entity employs residents of Paulding County, Georgia; and
6. Whether the individual or entity owns property in Paulding County, Georgia.

Engage, Inspire, Prepare

Purchasing Methodology

PCSD primarily utilizes three competitive solicitation methods:

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

REQUEST FOR QUOTE (RFQ) – generally utilized for aggregate purchases greater than $20,000 and less than $50,000.

- Written quote specifications developed by the school/department.
- Procurement Services will post the RFQ to the Euna Procurement portal (https://pauldingk12.bonfirehub.com/portal/).
- Vendors may register in Euna Procurement and sign up to receive PCSD RFQ's.
- RFQ is typically out "on the street" for 3 – 5 business days.
- Procurement Services will attempt to obtain a minimum of three written competitive quote responses.
- Vendors are required to complete the RFQ form(s) and submit to Procurement Services by the date stated in the RFQ.
- After quote responses are evaluated, Procurement Services will tabulate and issue an award notice to the lowest responsive, responsible offeror(s) meeting specifications and requirements in the RFQ.
- Records of the solicitation shall be kept in accordance with State Law and will be available for public viewing.
- Award notification does not guarantee purchase, a purchase order must be issued to validate purchase.

INVITATION FOR BID (IFB) – One of two types of "formal solicitation" generally utilized when aggregate purchase is $50,000 or greater. A Sealed IFB may be used to solicit offers for goods or services when price is the primary deciding factor for award.

- The end user department develops specifications and requirements necessary to obtain competitive pricing.
- Procurement Services will assist in drafting the IFB document. Procurement will also administer all aspects of the solicitation including posting the final IFB document, bid opening, evaluation, award, and contract management. Procurement will work in collaboration with the end user/subject matter expert during the award phase to ensure proper determination of award.
- When sealed bidding is required, an Invitation for Bid (IFB) will be posted on the PCSD Euna Procurement portal, at https://pauldingk12.bonfirehub.com/portal/, and the Georgia Procurement Registry, https://ssl.doas.state.ga.us/gpr/. Notification may be sent to a list of prospective vendors.

- IFB solicitations will designate a date and time bids will be due in the PCSD Euna Procurement portal. Bid responses will not be accepted after the stated date and time specified in the solicitation and at no location other than that which has been stated.
- For all purchases accomplished by IFB, the award will be made to the lowest responsive and responsible vendor. This is the vendor 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 vendor will not, therefore, always be the vendor who has submitted the lowest monetary bid. Award of bids will be made in the best interest of PCSD. An award letter will be issued to the awarded vendor(s).
- Board approval is required for award of all IFBs with an aggregate value over $100,000 annually.
- A tabulation of all bids received will be developed and retained by Procurement Services
- When all bid responses are unreasonable or unacceptable as to terms and conditions, are non-competitive, or the low bid exceeds available funds and it is determined in writing by Procurement Services that time or other circumstances will not permit the delay required to re-solicit competitive bids, a contract may be negotiated provided that each responsible vendor who submitted such a bid under the original solicitation is notified of the determination and is given a reasonable opportunity to negotiate. In cases where the bids received are non-competitive or the low bid exceeds available funds, the negotiated price shall be lower than the lowest rejected bid of any responsible vendor under the original solicitation.
- Records of the solicitation shall be kept in accordance with State Law and will be available for public viewing.
- Award notification does not guarantee purchase, a purchase order must be issued to validate purchase.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) – One of two types of "formal solicitation" utilized when aggregate purchase is $50,000 or greater. A Request for Proposal (RFP) may be used to solicit offers for goods or services when price is not the sole factor being considered for award or when the Director of Procurement determines that, the use of competitive sealed bidding is not advantageous to the PCSD.

- The end user department develops specifications and requirements necessary to obtain competitive pricing.
- Procurement Services will assist in drafting the RFP document. Procurement will also administer all aspects of the solicitation including posting the final RFP document, receiving responses, overseeing evaluation process, award, and contract management in collaboration with the end user/subject matter expert.
- When sealed RFP is required, the RFP will be posted on the PCSD Euna Procurement portal, at https://pauldingk12.bonfirehub.com/portal/, and the Georgia Procurement

Registry, https://ssl.doas.state.ga.us/gpr/. Notification may be sent to a list of prospective vendors.

- RFP solicitations will designate a date and time bids will be due in the PCSD Euna Procurement portal. Proposal responses will not be accepted after the stated date and time specified in the solicitation and at no location other than that which has been stated. There is no public opening of RFP responses.
- Proposal responses must be submitted as directed in the solicitation.
- The RFP shall state the relative importance of price and other evaluation factors. Price will be included as part of the determination of best value. Responses will be confirmed to be responsive and responsible prior to evaluation based upon published criteria.
- An evaluation committee will evaluate responses based upon published evaluation criteria.
- During the evaluation phase, discussions may be conducted as needed with vendors.
- Proposals will be evaluated and scored based on the published criteria.
- A determination of competitive range may be made during the evaluation process.
- A tabulation and evaluation of proposals shall be prepared and made available for public inspection after award of contract.
- An RFP award will be made to the responsive and responsible vendor(s) whose proposal is determined in writing to be in the best interest of (best value to) the PCSD, taking into consideration price and the evaluation factors set forth in the RFP document. The RFP file will contain the basis on which the award was made.
- Board approval is required for award of all RPFs with an aggregate value over $100,000 annually.
- An award letter will be issued to the awarded vendor(s).
- When all proposal responses are unreasonable or unacceptable as to terms and conditions, are non-competitive, or the best value response exceeds available funds and it is determined in writing by Procurement Services that time or other circumstances will not permit the delay required to re-solicit competitive proposals, a contract may be negotiated provided that each responsible vendor who submitted such an offer under the original solicitation is notified of the determination and is given a reasonable opportunity to negotiate. In cases where the proposals received are non-competitive or the best value exceeds available funds, the negotiated price shall be lower than the lowest rejected offer of any responsible vendor under the original solicitation.
- Records of the solicitation shall be kept in accordance with State Law and will be available for public viewing.
- Award notification does not guarantee purchase, a purchase order must be issued to validate purchase.

Engage, Inspire, Prepare

Purchasing Methodology

CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS – Construction Projects are defined as the building, altering, repairing, improving, or demolishing of any public structure or building or other public improvements of any kind to any public real property. This does not include the routine operation, repair, or maintenance of existing structures, buildings, or real property.

- For projects with an estimated cost greater than $50,000 and less than $250,000, the Procurement Department will issue a Request for Quote (RFQ) as outlined above.
- For projects with an estimated cost of $250,000 or more, the Procurement Services Department will issue a formal solicitation (RFP or IFB) as outlined above.
    - The solicitation shall comply with the requirements of the Georgia Local Government Public Works Construction Law, O.C.G.A. § 36-91-1 et seq.
    - Payment and performance bonds will be included in requirements for such projects.
- Board approval is required for award of construction projects estimated at $250,000 or greater

COOPERATIVE / PIGGYBACK PURCHASING – The Director of Procurement may participate in, sponsor, conduct, or administer a cooperative/piggyback purchasing agreement for the procurement of any supplies, services or construction with one or more governmental agencies in accordance with an agreement entered into between the participants. Such cooperative/piggyback purchasing may include, but is not limited to, purchase of standard items of school equipment, supplies, and services.

Engage, Inspire, Prepare

Purchasing Methodology

Rejection of A Bid or Proposal Response

The failure of a vendor to observe and follow the instructions and conditions of a solicitation can constitute grounds for rejection of a bid/proposal response and/or removal from the list of bidders. PCSD 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 vendors, or to waive any minor irregularity. PCSD Procurement Services reserves the right to award a solicitation under the most beneficial economic terms for the PCSD.

Common Reasons for Bid/Proposal Rejection

- Any response received after the designated time will be deemed late and will not be considered by the PCSD.
- Responses containing provisions for late charges, whether designated as interest charges or otherwise, will not be considered for an award. Vendors are instructed to refrain from presenting any such provisions, as it may be grounds to consider the response disqualified and, therefore, rejected.
- Responses that contain “conditional” requirements.
- Responses that fail to include all required information.
- Procurement Services generally requires a minimum of one hundred twenty (120) days to evaluate response for award. Therefore, those that limit the acceptance period to less than one hundred twenty (120) days may be rejected. When it is determined that a time period other than one hundred twenty (120) days is appropriate, the solicitation document will so indicate.
- Failure on the part of the vendor to submit requested samples within the time specified.
- Failure to provide any additional information requested by deadline identified during the evaluation process.
- The addition by the vendor 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 respond in accordance with an addendum.
- Responses that contain unreasonable terms and conditions, conditions that violate applicable law, or directly conflict with PCSD terms or purchasing procedures.
- Requirements for pre-payment.
- Freight or shipping terms not compliant with PCSD terms and conditions.

Engage, Inspire, Prepare

Purchasing Methodology

Formal Protest of an Award

1) Any protest disputing a competitive solicitation award must be submitted in writing to the Director of Procurement within five (5) working days of the award date of the solicitation. Any protests disputing irregularities in the solicitation process or any violation of federal or state law with respect to the solicitation process must be submitted in writing to the Director of Procurement within five (5) working days of when Bidder/offeror knew or should have known of the irregularities or the award date of the solicitation, whichever occurs first. Any protests disputing a sole source or emergency purchase must be submitted in writing to the Director of Procurement within five (5) working days of the award date, Board approval date or purchase order issue date, whichever occurs first. Any protest received after the time periods set forth above will not be considered. PCSD will only consider protests from bidders/offerors who submitted a timely bid/proposal for the applicable contract or those who were prevented from doing so due to an alleged irregularity. The Director of Procurement may delegate protest to the designated official if the solicitation was not awarded formally through the Procurement Department.

2) The initial protest should include all matters the bidder/offeror wishes PCSD to consider in deciding the protest outcome. At a minimum, the protest must include the following:
   a) Appropriate identification of the solicitation.
   b) School name and project description (if applicable).
   c) The basis of the protest, including supporting evidence.
   d) Relief sought; and
   e) It must be signed by a company officer authorized to sign contracts on behalf of the bidder/offeror submitting the protest.
   f) Issues not raised in the initial protest may, at PCSD's discretion, be deemed waived with prejudice.

3) Protests should be sent by U.S. Mail, overnight delivery, or hand delivery to:

   Director of Procurement
   Paulding County School District
   3236 Atlanta Highway
   Dallas, GA 30132

   a) The outside of the envelope should clearly state "Protest IFB/RFP/RFQ xx-xx" in large, bold letters.
   b) Protests will be deemed received when they are physically received by the Procurement Services Department. Emails and faxes are unacceptable methods of delivery and will be rejected.

PCSD will thoroughly review and evaluate all protests and base the decision on the merits of the protest. A written response will be provided by PCSD within ten (10) working days of the receipt of the protest. Any appeal must be filed within three (3) working days of the Director of Procurement's protest decision. The written appeal must contain facts detailing why the Protestor deems the action taken by the Director of Procurement unacceptable. Protest appeals should be sent in the same manner and to the same address provided above. Appeals will be reviewed by the Chief Financial Officer and a written response provided. The Chief Financial Officer's decision as to any appeal shall be final.

Engage, Inspire, Prepare

Vendor Code of Ethics

The Paulding County School District Procurement Services Department is a strong proponent of ethical conduct throughout the procurement process. Its agency procurement staff abides by the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing, Inc. (NIGP) Code of Ethics. Similarly, the same level of conduct is expected of the vendors who do business with PCSD.

A vendor doing business with PCSD shall:

- Understand the dignity and worth of services rendered by your organization and the social responsibilities assumed as a supplier of goods and services to the PCSD.
- Avoid attempts to influence PCSD staff with the intent to impair the objectivity or independence of judgment of a purchasing transaction.
- Avoid any appearance of unethical or compromising practices in business relationships, actions, and communications.
- Identify and eliminate participation of any individual in procurement situations where a conflict of interest may be involved.
- Understand that PCSD procurement staff shall at no time or under any circumstances, accept directly or indirectly, gifts, favor, service, gratuities, or other items of value from your organization.
- Adhere to all applicable laws, regulations, and procedures to ensure the integrity of the PCSD procurement process.
- Perform or render goods or services in accordance with the agreed upon specifications for which the supplier has contracted with the PCSD.
- Constantly strive for the highest standards of ethical behavior, trust, respect, fairness, integrity, and credibility.

Engage, Inspire, Prepare

TIPs and FAQs

Tips for Doing Business with PCSD

- Be sure to read the information published on the Purchasing webpage, https://www.paulding.k12.ga.us/Page/507.
- Be sure to fill out the Vendor Application on our webpage https://www.paulding.k12.ga.us/Page/508 and submit a current W-9.
- Periodically check for opportunities under the "Current Solicitations" link of the Purchasing webpage.
- Learn who the key decision maker is for your given product/service and request a meeting; the PCSD webpage has contact information for major departments.
- Discover what we buy and how we buy it. Target your sales efforts to product we use.
- Understand there are certain products we buy from annual contracts and know that we buy those products through a competitive solicitation process. Be prepared to offer your goods/services through the next bidding opportunity.
- Do not solicit schools without an appointment. Most school officials are too busy for "drop by" visits. Professionalism in appointment setting often goes a long way to secure a meeting.
- Follow-up when given the opportunity to provide a good or service, excellent customer service is the primary factor in receiving other opportunities to quote.
- Understand that as stewards of public funds, we are obligated to seek competition within the published thresholds. Do not take it as offense but use it as a means of earning business within your particular industry.

Tips for Success of Formal Solicitations

- Check the PCSD purchasing webpage for bidding opportunities. All solicitations processed through the purchasing page are posted publicly.
- Read the complete document! 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 IFBs—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 requested information:
  - Provide information in the format requested. (i.e. if references are requested on a particular form, then you must provide them in that format).
  - Fill in all forms as requested with your submission. Even if you do not understand why, provide all required information. This is a major reason for rejected bids.
  - Provide samples if requested.
  - 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.

  - Note the insurance requirements in each solicitation and ensure you have the necessary coverage. Proof of the required coverage will be requested prior to award.
  - Respond to the IFB/RFP as requested. Even if you have a solution you feel is better. Most of the time, the entity may consider an alternative, but only if you bid what they ask for first.
  - Pay attention to terms and conditions. Be aware that many "standard" contracts offered by vendors contain provisions that are against the law for a school system to sign. PCSD takes seriously the provisions of its contract and will deem offers "non-responsive" that fail to meet the material elements or offers that place undue burden on the District.
  - Check Euna Procurement while the solicitation is "out on the street" for addendum or notes regarding the solicitation.
- Be aware of all required meetings as well as all deadlines.
- Allow plenty of time to upload your submission into Euna Procurement, if it is not fully uploaded by the due date/time, it will not be considered.
- Submit questions in writing during the solicitation phase. This ensures that both parties have a clear understanding of both the question and the corresponding answer.
- Answer any requested information with concise and thorough information. More verbiage is not necessarily better if it makes it difficult for the evaluation committee to interpret. Label your responses to the applicable section and present in a neat and orderly fashion.
- Be available to answer any clarification questions during the evaluation phase. Designate someone if you are going to be out of reach. Respond promptly to requests from the evaluation committee.
- Follow-up! 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.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: ***Am I an "Approved Vendor" after submitting a vendor application?***

A: No, PCSD only recognizes the term "approved vendor" for those companies who have been awarded contracts through the competitive solicitation process.

Q: ***What then is my status after submission of application and when can schools buy from me?***

A: Submitting a vendor application allows you to be in our system and available should a school or department request to purchase from your organization or for an IFB/RFQ/RFP to be awarded to your company.

Q: ***I have a company resume that I like to send out, why do I need to fill out your vendor application and submit a W-9?***

A: The information requested on the Vendor Application is required to be considered as a vendor for PCSD. It is also required to submit it in the format requested. The W-9 is required by our Finance department to ensure compliance with relevant tax code. Please note that insufficient information or lack of a W-9 will put a hold on your application.

Engage, Inspire, Prepare

TIPs and FAQs

Q: ***Will my response still be received if my Bid/RFP response is late due to technical outage or unexpected closure of our offices or the District?***

A: All solicitations must be received by the date/time designated in the solicitation document. It is better not to wait until the last minute to begin uploading your response into Euna Procurement. It is solely the responsibility of the bidder to ensure receipt of submission.

Q: ***Will you accept responses via fax or email?***

A: Formal solicitations require submission via PCSD's Euna Procurement portal. Informal solicitations such as RFQs may allow for fax or email submission. Each document will specify acceptable means of submission.

Q: ***My Company requires pre-payment for any shipment, is this acceptable?***

A: Only in extremely rare cases will PCSD pay for a product/service before it is received. You should disclose this to the purchaser up front to see if Finance approves but note this is not permitted often.

Q: **What if I want copies of particular information pertaining to a IFB or RFP?**

A: The PCSD Communications office oversees all Open Records Request for the school system. You should contact the Communications department via email to Communications@paulding.k12.ga.us with your request compliant with the State of Georgia's Open Record Act.

Q: **I have filled out a vendor application and rarely see any correspondence regarding open solicitations, have I been forgotten?**

A: Vendors should register with Euna Procurement to receive notifications of solicitations.

Q: **Who determines the specifications used to acquire goods and services?**

A: The end-user department, as subject matter experts, has the autonomy to determine product specifications and requirements. Purchasing is responsible for facilitating the solicitation process between the end-user and the market.

Q: **I really would like the Purchasing Department to see my particular product/service as I think it would bring value to the school system. Is Purchasing willing to see my demo or "test" the product?**

A: As stated above, Purchasing does not specify the products or services used in most cases. We are always willing to meet with an appointment, but do not make specification decisions nor attempt to influence end users beyond assuring that specifications are not so restrictive as to unfairly exclude vendors. Vendors are best served to meet with the department responsible for specifying the particular product/service regarding specifications. Purchasing is willing to meet for basic purchasing information not pertaining to direct specification issues.

Q: **Can PCSD make purchases from existing government contacts or cooperative agreements?**

A: In most cases, the answer is yes. In fact, there are times when "piggy-backing" on an existing contract of a peer or purchasing from a competitively bid co-op can be beneficial. It would be wise to mention these opportunities to PCSD if/when they exist.