



CARROLL COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

PURCHASING POLICY

Mission Statement:

The Carroll County Public Schools Office of Purchasing strives to administer a fair and transparent purchasing process conducted by a staff of highly qualified purchasing professionals. We are committed to acting in the fiduciary interest of the taxpayer, providing excellent customer service while obtaining the best value for our user agencies, and ensuring open and fair opportunities for our vendor community while maximizing competition.

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the requirements to provide for a fair, transparent, and legally compliant purchasing process to be utilized when spending CCPS funds.

II. Application

This policy applies to all procurements for goods and services over the formal bid limit established in Board Policy DJE.

III. Administration

The Supervisor of Purchasing is responsible for administering this policy and is responsible for maintaining compliance with all applicable rules, regulations, and Board Policies.

IV. Standards

A. Provisions of this policy will apply to all CCPS funds including, but not limited to, school activity funds, grants, and monetary donations, except as exempted in this policy.

B. The Board requires competitive procurement for all goods and services over the formal bid limit as established in Board Policy DJE. Exempted from competitive procurements are sole source, single source, emergency procurements, textbooks, materials of instruction, and professional service contracts as described in Board Policy DJA. Sole source, single source, emergency procurements, and professional service contracts will be approved by the Supervisor of Purchasing, or their designee, in writing and subject to Board approval and reporting per Board Policies DJE and DJA.

C. The Office of Purchasing will administer all procurement activities in accordance with Federal, State, and Local laws and policies.

D. A formal solicitation is required for procurements over the formal bid limit as established in Board Policy DJE, except where exempted in this policy. For procurements under the formal bid limit established in Board policy DJE, the Supervisor of Purchasing will establish procurement procedures.

E. Professional Service contracts will be awarded and reported to the Board in accordance with Board policy DJA.

F. Goods and services procured through a purchasing cooperative will follow bidding procedures described in the Annotated Code of Maryland, State Finance and Procurement Article. Competitive procurement is not required when the

procurement is made through contracts formally solicited and awarded through intergovernmental purchases.

G. For all purchase contracts involving the expenditure of federal funds, federal grants, and/or federal awards, CCPS will comply with the uniform guidance procurement rules issued by the United States Office of Management and Budget.

H. The Supervisor of Purchasing will have the signature authority to execute contracts under this policy.

V. Procurement Methods

A. Invitation to Bid (ITB) may be used when the specific requirements are known and there is adequate competition available. Generally, the bid will be awarded to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder if all conditions of the bid are met. Bids may be awarded in whole, or in part, in the best interest of CCPS.

B. Request for Proposals (RFP) may be used when the exact requirements are not known, or price is not the primary deciding factor for award. Awards may be made to the vendor/s submitting the highest rated proposal in combination with a competitive financial proposal.

C. Cooperative Purchasing may be used when piggy-backing another entities contract or participating in a cooperative procurement with other entities for the same or similar goods or services. Cooperative procurements will be documented to be in the best interest of CCPS and not used to circumvent procurement policy.

D. Sole/Single Source Procurements will be used when there is only one known source of supply, or procurement from a single vendor is necessary for purposes of compatibility or other requirements. Sole and Single Source procurements will be documented to be in the best interest of CCPS and not used to circumvent procurement policy.

E. Emergency procurements may be used when there is a threat to life, health, safety, or school property. The Supervisor of Purchasing will be responsible for making the determination that the use of an emergency procurement is justified.

F. Pre-Qualified Vendor Lists will be established when CCPS determines that a good or service requires vendors to pre-qualify based on technical and financial ability and experience to perform a job prior to bidding on CCPS projects. The determination a vendor is best qualified to provide a good or service, the number of vendors pre-qualified, and the term of the pre-qualification period is at the sole discretion of CCPS.

VI. Public Notice

Invitation to Bid and Request for Proposals will be advertised on the CCPS website and other sites available to the public as required by law for a reasonable time, but not less than twenty (20) calendar days before submittals are due.

VII. Award

All bid and contract awards above the formal procurement limit established in Board Policy DJE will be subject to approval by the Carroll County Board of Education.

VIII. Rights Under CCPS

- A. CCPS reserves the right to reject any and all bids, in whole or in part, or terminate a procurement at any time.
- B. CCPS reserves the right to make an award for a purchase and/or contract, when in the best interest of CCPS.
- C. CCPS reserves the right to suspend and/or debar a contractor from doing business with CCPS, when the Supervisor of Purchasing has determined the actions or behaviors of a vendor have been so egregious that suspension or debarment is in the best interest of CCPS. The length of a suspension or debarment will be determined by the Supervisor of Purchasing.

IX. Remedies Available to Vendors

- A. Vendors suspended or debarred from doing business with CCPS can appeal the decision to the Supervisor of Purchasing within seven (7) calendar days of the decision. The Supervisor of Purchasing will make the final determination on the appeal, and that decision will be final.
- B. Vendors aggrieved with the specifications or intent to award a formal bid may submit a formal protest, in writing, to the Supervisor of Purchasing within seven (7) calendar days of when the aggrieved vendor knew, or should have known, of the issues resulting in the protest. The Supervisor of Purchasing will review the protest for merit and render a final decision, in writing, within twenty (20) calendar days of receipt of the protest.

X. Definitions

Within the context of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- A. Contract – A legally binding agreement or Memorandum of Understanding, between the Board and a vendor, merchant, consultant, organization, entity, or business, for

money or other consideration for the procurement or disposal of goods, services, or construction.

- B. Donations – Equipment, materials, money, or property given to a school or to the school system, without compensation or other consideration, for use in or in conjunction with educational or extracurricular programs or activities with no expectation of return and become the property of the Board.
- C. Emergency Procurement – The awarding of a contract due to a sudden of a serious, urgent, and threatening nature that demands immediate action to avoid termination of essential services or a danger to life, health, safety, or property condition.
- D. Formal Solicitation – A formal invitation to receive quotes, in the form of a request for proposal or an invitation to bid.
- E. Goods – Tangible commodities provided to the Board in exchange for payment.
- F. CCPS Employee – Any individual who is a permanent or temporary employee of the CCPS whose compensation is paid in whole or part by the Board, including but not limited to, school-based administrators, teachers, substitute teachers, paraeducators, and other school-based and Central Office support staff.
- G. Intergovernmental Purchase – The acquisition of goods or services from another government agency such as the county, state or other public entities, allowing the school system and other jurisdictions to standardize and share specifications, technical services, and procurement information provided the goods or services meet the desired specifications and prices.
- H. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) – For the purposes of this policy this is an agreement between parties often used to clarify terms and may be used as a basis of a future formal contract or deed.
- I. Procurement – The process of obtaining goods and/or services.
- J. Procurement Methods – Method by which goods, services, or materials may be acquired, and which are determined by CCPS Board policy DJE.
- K. Purchasing Cooperative – Participation in or use of a contract for goods and/or services that are awarded by other public agencies or by intergovernmental purchasing organizations.
- L. Quotation – A written offer by a supplier that includes the supplier's name, contact information, brief description of work, associated price and date for delivery or completion of work.

- M. Response – A written or verbal quote, bid, proposal, or offer.
- N. School Activity Funds – All cash funds held in the name of a school including fundraising proceeds, cash donations, funds transferred from the Board, and funds provided to a school not allocated through the Board budget.
- O. Services – The rendering of time, effort, or work rather than the furnishing of a specific physical product. Includes, but is not limited to, the professional, personal, and/or contractual services provided by architects, engineers, attorneys, accountants, physicians, consultants, appraisers, land surveys, and where services are associated with the provision of expertise or labor, or both.
- P. Single Source – A contract for the procurement of goods and/or services entered in which two or more vendors can supply the commodity, technology and/or perform the services required by an agency, but one vendor is chosen over the others because of past and demonstrated experience and/or uniqueness of the service or goods provided.
- Q. Sole Source – A contract for the procurement of goods and/or services entered in which only one supplier can provide the commodity, technology and/or perform the services or provide the goods required.
- R. Solicitation – A requirements document that outlines the procurement process and selection criteria to obtain goods and/or services to be delivered or completed that is formally advertised to the public.
- S. Specifications – A clear, complete, and accurate description of the goods and/or services required in a procurement activity.
- T. Vendor – A person or entity providing goods and/or services.

This policy is effective June 1, 2026, until revised.