

Business/Non-Instructional Operations

Soliciting Prices (Bids, Proposals and Quotations)

The Board of Education or its agents shall refrain from entering into contracts with or purchasing goods or services from any firm or individual who has a sales representative or owner on the Board of Education.

All contracts for, and purchases of supplies, materials, equipment and contractual services in the amount of \$50,000 or more shall be based, when possible, on at least three competitive bids or proposals. All purchases greater than \$5,000 but less than \$50,000 in amount may be made in the open market, but shall, when possible, be based on at least three competitive proposals, quotations or prices. All purchases made in the open market shall be consummated after careful pricing. In an emergency situation these requirements may be waived by the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall notify the Board Chairman as soon as possible and the entire Board of Education at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

All contracts and all open market orders will be awarded to the lowest responsible qualified contractor or supplier, taking into consideration all of the factors set forth in policy #3320.

When bidding procedures are used, bids or RFPs (Request for Proposals) shall be advertised in an area newspaper for at least one day. The Director of Business shall direct placement of advertisement. When specifications are prepared, they will be sent to all vendors who have indicated an interest in bidding on the items or services being bid.

All bids/RFPs must be submitted in sealed envelopes, addressed to the Director of Business and plainly marked with the name of the bid/RFP and the time of the opening. Bids/RFPs shall be opened at the time specified and all bidders and other interested persons may be present.

The school district reserves the right to reject any or all bids/RFPs and to accept that bid/RFP which appears to be in the best interest of the Town. The Board reserves the right to waive any informalities in, or reject, any or all bids/RFPs or any part thereof. Any bid/RFP may be withdrawn prior to the scheduled time for the opening of such. Any bid/RFP received after the time and date specified shall not be considered.

(cf. 3320 – Purchasing Procedures)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

7-148v Requirements for competitive bidding

P.A. 13-71 An Act Concerning Requirements for Competitive Bidding for the Award of Contracts or Purchase of Property by Municipalities.

Town of Newtown Codebook, Chapter 350: Purchasing

Business/Non-Instructional Operations

Purchasing – Bids, Quotations, Proposals

Where it appears in the interest of the Newtown Board of Education, the Board may, at its option, elect to participate in joint bidding operations with other boards of education, cooperatives, ~~or~~ municipalities, regional or national organization. In addition, purchases may be made by use of State of Connecticut contract pricing as opposed to using a formal bid process. State pricing agreements may also be used as a benchmark in evaluating bids and proposals.

If opportunity exists and costs appear beneficial to the Newtown school system, the Board may act to utilize existing bid prices for the Town of Newtown or other towns and schools as an alternative to bidding independently.

Bids/RFPs may entail definition of specific quantities or may solicit prices only on a unit basis. When bid quantities are advertised or specified, every effort should be made to fulfill this commitment. However, allowable alternatives to the formal bid process, such as those defined in Sections 5 and 6 below, shall not be used in such a way to limit quantity or total expense so that the categorical qualifications set forth in Section 7 are avoided.

Items that specifically merit bidding or Request for Proposals on a yearly basis because of the absolute magnitude of their purchase include, but are not restricted to:

1. Maintenance supplies, custodial supplies, and heating oil
2. Educational and office equipment
3. Educational, office, and general supplies
4. Classroom and cafeteria furniture
5. Health and medical supplies
6. Contracted maintenance or custodial services

Solicitation for written proposals may be substituted for a bid process when both the Director of Business and the Superintendent agree that the interest of the Newtown schools would best be served because of:

1. Time constraints on the work or materials in question
2. Alternative purchase options (wide-range specifications)
3. Unit cost of materials or services being researched
4. Availability of viable competitors
5. Consideration of the relative expense involved in collecting proposals

Business/Non-Instructional Operations**Purchasing – Bids, Quotations, Proposals (continued)**

This practice will require that a minimum of three (3) written proposals are secured, with a stipulation to hold price for thirty (30) days or more.

The proposal concept will be valid for expenditures up to \$50,000. Except in emergency situations that relate to the health and welfare of students and staff, any expenditure over the above-stated \$50,000 limit will require bids or formal proposals.

In order to determine the relative merits of the apparent best proposal, the party soliciting the prices may utilize comparative data from surrounding towns and schools where such practice is reasonable. Items similar in nature to contracted repairs, maintenance, or installation would be sourced through proposals.

In cases involving a purchase order that does not exceed \$5,000 a minimum of three quotations via telephone, catalog and/or electronic communication should be obtained in order to determine availability and lowest cost. The results of such polling must be recorded and a copy of the record filed with the purchase order resulting from this process.

For all items or contracted work exceeding \$50,000 in total cost, the award will be approved by the Board prior to notification of the winner. For any purchase or service not specifically provided for in the description above or the budget, all procedures, other than in an emergency, must abide by the bid limits and processes described in this document. If an emergency occurs, it shall be reported to the Board of Education Chairman immediately and to the Board at the next regular meeting.

Items exempt from bidding or Requests for Proposals include:

1. Emergency professional services
2. Services for RESC (Regional Educational Service Centers)
3. Single source materials
4. Software and textbooks
5. Extensions of existing services requiring systems compatibility, i.e., security alarms technology, energy management, surveillance, locksets, etc.
6. Consultants for studies and or district specific needs, i.e., projections, load bearing facilities issues, mold, asbestos, lead, investigations, etc.
7. Used vehicles
8. Technology Equipment

Business/Non-Instructional Operations

Purchasing – Bids, Quotations, Proposals (continued)

Whenever an initial bid/RFP is awarded, the Board may consider extending it for one or more years with Board approval if

- there is a significant financial advantage to extending the bid/RFP
- there is a financial analysis provided to the Board to verify the financial advantage
- the Superintendent or designee recommends the extension of the bid/RFP for the additional period to the Board of Education
- the bid/RFP extension is valid for only the time period so approved.