



NON-INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES: Purchasing  
Purchasing Principles

I. Purpose

To establish principles and responsibilities to be used in making purchases on behalf of the Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS).

II. Responsibility

- A. The Office of Purchasing is responsible for administering and coordinating the centralized procurement functions of BCPS.
- B. The Office of Purchasing shall be responsible for establishing written procedures for the purchasing activities of the school system.

III. Statement of Principles

- A. Any attempt on the part of a vendor to influence procurement decisions by offers of gifts or gratuities is a violation of the Board's ethics code and will be rejected. Such actions may result in debarment as a vendor with BCPS.
- B. No contract will knowingly be awarded to an individual or business if participation in the award violates the Board's ethics code or if the Ethics Review Panel finds that a conflict of interest exists.
- C. All procurement transactions will be conducted in accordance with applicable laws, Board policies, Superintendent's rules and established school system procedures.
- D. The Superintendent has authorized that some purchases may be allowed by using a school system authorized purchase card program. The Office of Purchasing shall establish procedures for approved purchases for this program and the Office of Financial Reporting shall provide training to persons authorized to participate in the program.

IV. Guidelines

- A. All purchases are subject to the published procedures, authority and scrutiny

of the Office of Purchasing.

- B. When purchasing educational products or services, any necessary training, including all of the vendor's travel expenses, must also be included in the purchasing process.
- C. The requisition for textbooks or other instructional materials must be made in accordance with Board Policy and Superintendent's Rule 6002, *Selection of Instructional Materials*.
- D. BCPS will not be financially responsible for, and has no obligation to, reimburse individuals or businesses for independent, unauthorized purchases or contracts entered into by BCPS employees.

V. Solicitation Specifications

- A. The Office of Purchasing will consult with other BCPS departments, as necessary, during the development of specifications for pricing, terms and conditions.
- B. Solicitations will be awarded to responsible and responsive bidders whose proposals meet the requirements and evaluation criteria set forth in the solicitation and is either the most favorable bid price or most favorable evaluation. A proposal may not be evaluated for any requirement or criterion that is not disclosed in the solicitation.

VI. Public Information

- A. The Office of Purchasing will provide access to all purchasing files and records in accordance with Maryland's Public Information Act or as required by law.
- B. All confidential commercial, financial or otherwise proprietary information of a vendor or bidder that has been clearly identified as such in the response to solicitation and is part of the procurement process shall be maintained as confidential, subject to release only as required by law.

VII. Compliance

- A. Each employee responsible for making purchases or goods and services on

behalf of BCPS shall follow the Board policies, Superintendent's rules and established procedures for such purchases. Willful failure to do so may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

- B. The Office of Purchasing shall provide necessary training to employees on purchasing procedures, programs and school system purchasing policies and procedures.
- C. All employees responsible for using the purchasing programs shall participate in the minimum required training.
- D. Purchases that do not adhere to the BCPS purchasing principles:
  - 1. May not be approved;
  - 2. May not be paid for by Board funds; or
  - 3. May result in BCPS seeking reimbursement from the employee who made the purchase.

Legal References: *Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article §5-112, Bids*  
*Annotated Code of Maryland, State Finance and Procurement Article,*  
*Title 14, Subtitle 3, Minority Business Participation*  
*COMAR 21.11.03, Minority Business Enterprise Policies*

Related Policies: Board of Education Policy 3209, *Purchasing Principles*  
Board of Education Policy 3210, *Purchasing Guidelines*  
Board of Education Policy 3215, *Contract Execution*  
Board of Education Policy 3230, *Qualification of Vendors*  
Board of Education Policy 3520, *Maintenance*  
Board of Education Policy 4100, *Employee Conduct and Responsibilities*  
Board of Education Policy 6002, *Selection of Instructional Materials*  
Board of Education Policy 8360 Sub Series, *Ethics Code*

Related Rules: Superintendent's Rule 2373, *Public Information Act Requests*  
Superintendent's Rule 6002, *Selection of Instructional Materials*

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Superintendent of Schools