



BUYING TIPS FOR SCHOOLS

1. Buy District First

The Board of Education adopted the “*Buy and Use LAUSD First*” Resolution on November 13, 2012. The Resolution requires all schools and offices to purchase daily supplies and materials from the District General Stores Warehouse Catalog to better utilize school and office budgets. The General Stores Warehouse carries over 2,800 different items and offers lower prices by taking advantage of the District’s large purchasing volumes. The District’s Office of Inspector General conducted an audit that determined that schools can save 20% - 40% by purchasing from the Warehouse. There are several other reasons to buy first from the Warehouse i.e., high quality products, items that are tested and safety approved by OEHS, uniformed drivers, and a 100% satisfaction guarantee.

2. Avoid single- and sole-sourced contracts!

Unless it is clearly justified (e.g., emergency, selected firm is named in the grant or the selected firm is specified by law), requests for single- and sole-sourced contracts valued over \$25,000 will be **rejected**. If Procurement fails to find clear support for an argument that no other firm could provide the professional service, in particular, the requesting school will be directed to conduct an Informal Request for Proposals. Better (and often less time-consuming) for you to conduct an IRFP, yourself, in the first instance.

If you must request that a contract be issued without the benefit of having compared three or more bids or proposals, then, in addition to explaining why other possible providers could not provide the needed good or service, your single-/sole-source contract justification *must also explain how the price the school will pay was determined to be reasonable*. Acceptable means of determining that a price is reasonable, when a vendor has not been selected through competition, include market research, reviewing published price lists or public contracts and reviewing recognized market indices, among other methods. ***Note, too, that (a) as of October 20, 2015, single-source contract requests must be accompanied by Board informatives and (b) where a contractor was named in the grant, the Board may require an explanation of how the contractor was selected to be so named.***

3. No “after-the-facts,” please!

Be sure that your contract is fully-executed and/or your purchase order issued before your vendor delivers the goods or provides the services. Remember:

- Accounts Payable will not pay for goods or services provided prior to the effective date of an appropriate contract or purchase order and
- Goods and services provided before the effective date of an appropriate contract or purchase order may not be subject to the District terms and conditions; they may be provided without suitable protection for you or the District.

4. Do not sign a vendor’s contract.

- With few exceptions, only the Procurement Services Division has the delegated authority to sign contracts (or other documents that contain commitments for the District or a school) on behalf of the LAUSD or any of its schools; contracts signed by those without authority may be deemed void.
- Vendors’ contracts—even those that would not require the District to pay money—may contain provisions that could be harmful to the District.

5. Commitments to share student data require special handling.

- Before you issue a purchase order for goods or services that will involve the vendor being given access to any student data that is directly related to an identifiable District pupil (current or former) and is maintained by the District or by a District employee in the performance of his or her duties, you must contact Procurement to confirm that the vendor in question has signed an appropriate Data Use Agreement documenting the vendor's commitment to comply with the law and with District policy.

6. Renewal Options Must Be Exercised.

- If you want to extend a contract by exercising a renewal option provided for in the agreement, you must take action by asking that this office effect the extension; renewal is not automatic.
- If an option is not exercised, the contract will expire on the date shown in the contract, and the sponsor will need to request (and possibly negotiate) a new contract, showing competition, as appropriate, if the sponsor wants to continue to receive the goods or services after the expiration date of the original contract.

7. Enter your receivers timely!

- If a receiver is not entered by the end of the fiscal year, the funds will no longer be available in that fiscal year. Instead, the funds will come from the fiscal year in which the receiver is entered. (A good rule of thumb is to try to enter the receiver within five business days after receiving your goods or services.)

8. Be diligent in conducting your Informal RFPs.

- Allow 4-6 weeks in your purchase plan to complete the IRFP process;
- Do not use a description of the services (Scope of Work) written by a vendor who may be asked to submit a proposal or otherwise tailored to one vendor's services;
- Be sure to request proposals in writing and require that the proposals be in writing;
- Take advantage of the sample solicitation letter posted on the Procurement Website, but tailor the evaluation criteria to your needs; and
- Include in your request package;
 - The proposals, the proposal request (i.e., your solicitation letter),
 - Completed applicable IRFP Checklist (showing each proposer's total price), and
 - Names & signatures of evaluators (at least two).

9. New Vendor Evaluation System

A new Vendor Evaluation System should be operational by Mid-September. The new VES can be accessed through the current Interim LRP System and will allow any user with a Single-Sign-On to access the System. It will also:

- Allow users to rate a Vendor and assign up to five (5) stars (highest rating).
- Allow users to rate a Vendor on a series of ten (10) questions that are designed to gauge a Vendor's responsiveness, timeliness, and quality.

Local District	Local District Buyer	E-mail Address	Phone Number
Northeast	Sandra Castellanos	Scast21@lausd.net	(818) 252-5468
Northwest	Jina Jung	Jina.jung@lausd.net	(818) 654-3719
South	Oscar Montes	Oscar.montes@lausd.net	(310) 354-3558
East	Mario Fuller	Mario.fuller@lausd.net	(323) 224-3179
West	Odette Delgado	Maria.q.delgado@lausd.net	(310) 914-2172
Central	Zachary Watson	Zachary.watson@lausd.net	(213) 241-0188