



Purchasing Department

301 Fourth St. SW
Largo, FL 33770-3536
(727) 588-6143

<https://www.pcsb.org/Domain/187>

***How to Do
Business with
Pinellas County
School District***

The School Board of Pinellas County, Florida, prohibits any and all forms of discrimination and harassment based on race, color, sex, religion, natural origin, marital status, age, sexual orientation or disability in any of its programs, services or activities.

FOREWORD

Purchasing department personnel hope this guide will help our customers understand how to do business with the school district and become acquainted with the school district's policies and procedures. It is intended to promote goodwill with the vendor community and to serve as a general guide for doing business with the district. If you have questions that are not answered in this booklet, please contact us so we can help.

Joe Benjamin, NIGP-CPP, CPPO, CPPB
Director of Purchasing
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LOCATIONS & BUSINESS HOURS

The purchasing department is located in the School Administration Building, 301 Fourth St. SW, 3rd Floor, Largo, FL, 33770-3536. **Main Telephone:** (727) 588-6143. Normal business hours are 7:00 a.m.- 4:30 p.m. It is recommended, whenever possible, to schedule an appointment to assure the appropriate staff member will be available to meet with you.

For security reasons, *ALL* visitors to the Administration Building must use the main entrances only. All other entrances will be locked. Guests will be required to have a government issued Drivers' License or ID and wear a visitor tag at all times when visiting the buildings.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Purchasing Department provides centralized purchasing support for all schools and departments. All requests for equipment, supplies, services and construction are processed through Purchasing. Buyers are assigned specific commodity areas for which they are responsible in order to provide the best possible service to the district. You may obtain information about each buyer's specific responsibilities by visiting our website or by contacting our office. Requests for Qualifications for Professional Services and Construction Managers at Risk are solicited through the Purchasing Department utilizing the

processes outlined in F.S. 287.055 also known as the "Consultant's Competitive Negotiation Act". The Professional Service Selection Committee is chaired by the Purchasing Department. Once a firm has been selected, a Notice of Intent to Award is published on the Purchasing website. After a contract has been negotiated, the Facilities Department submits this contract to the School Board for approval.

OBTAINING INFORMATION

The purchasing website offers a wealth of information and makes bidding documents and bid results accessible 24 hours per day, 7 days per week at your convenience. Visit the [Purchasing Department website](#) to obtain:

- Results of past bids & last prices paid.
- Bids recommended for award at the next school board meeting.
- Historical bid award information.
- Term Contracts Bid Schedule.
- Buyers' specific commodity responsibilities

To download bidding documents for a current bid in process, you first must [register with OpenGov](#).

VENDOR REGISTRATION

The authority to approve responsible vendors to transact business with the district lies within the purchasing department. Vendors wishing to receive bid solicitations must first-register online with [OpenGov Procurement](#).

This link will take you to the district's OpenGov portal, a web-based e-procurement system. Once registered, you will be sent a confirming email back letting you know your account has been activated, and you automatically will begin receiving e-mail notifications of all bidding opportunities for the commodity areas for which you have registered. There is no charge for the use of this website, but you must be registered or you will have no other means of obtaining this information.

ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS

Employees are prohibited from accepting gifts or gratuities that might influence their decision

to purchase from a specific vendor with the exception of promotional items bearing company logos or advertising.

SITE VISITATIONS & THE JESSICA LUNSFORD ACT

As required by The Jessica Lunsford Act [s.21 of Ch.2005-28, L.O.F.], if anyone representing a vendor under contract with the school district will:

1. **have access to school grounds when students are present,**
2. **have direct contact with students**
3. **have access to or control of school funds.**

Such personnel are required to be screened at Level 2, to include fingerprinting, statewide criminal and juvenile justice records checks through the Florida Department of Law Enforcement and federal criminal records checks through the Federal Bureau of Investigation. [s. 1012.465, Florida Statutes]

The requirements of this law must be met in order for the school board to contract with your company. For information about how this law may affect your business, refer to the [badge instruction](#) on the district website.

Vendors may visit schools directly by first contacting the school principal for permission and scheduling an appointment. Please **do not** contact the purchasing department for approval to visit schools.

BIDS & QUOTATIONS

Informal Quotations (Under \$10,000.01)

One (1) quotation is required, either verbal or written, at the buyer's discretion. The official purchase order is issued and signed by the director of purchasing. There are additional quotation limits when the district is utilizing Federal Funds.

Formal Written Quotations (\$10,000.01-\$50,000)

A minimum of three (3) written quotations are required, more at the buyer's discretion. The lowest responsive quote is determined, and an

official purchase order is issued and signed by the director of purchasing.

Sealed Bids & Proposals: (\$50,000.01 or more)

Specifications are developed, and bids then are solicited. The bid document is posted on the OpenGov that automatically notifies registered vendors. After bids are evaluated by district staff and approved by the school board, an official purchase order is signed by the director of purchasing and issued to the successful bidder(s).

Pre-bid Conferences

On more complex bids, a pre-bid conference may be necessary. Attendance at pre-bid conferences is usually **MANDATORY**. Failure to attend a mandatory pre-bid conference (*on time*) and sign the attendance roster will prohibit a vendor from bidding the project.

Submitting Bids

Sealed bids must be submitted in the district's OpenGov procurement portal. All bids are logged in and time and date stamped in OpenGov to document when they were received. **LATE BIDS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

Please Note: The purchasing department is not responsible for the reliability or performance of the OpenGov platform. It is solely the vendor's responsibility to ensure that their bid is received by the deadline specified in the Invitation to Bid.

Public Bid Openings

The names of all firms who have submitted a timely bid, and their total bid price submitted, shall be made public immediately following the bid due date and time, listed herein, per F.S. 255.0518. Interested parties can view this information at OpenGov.com under the advertised bid title. Any recordings and/or bid proposals shall be exempt from public records requests until such time as the notice of an intended decision is published, or until 30 days after opening the bids, whichever occurs earlier.

If the District rejects all bids, proposals, or replies and concurrently provides notice of its intent to reissue a competitive solicitation, any recordings, bid proposals or records submitted,

remain exempt from public records requests until such time as the District provides notice of an intended decision concerning the reissued competitive solicitation, until the District withdraws the reissued competitive solicitation, or 12 months after the publication of the initial notice rejecting all bids, proposals, or replies. Section 119.071(1)(b), F.S.; and Section 286.0113, F.S.

Please be aware that any meeting at which (1) there is negotiation with a Supplier, (2) a Supplier makes an oral presentation, or (3) a Supplier answers questions, pursuant to a competitive solicitation, are closed to competitors and other members of the public. Team meetings at which negotiation strategies are discussed are likewise closed. Such meetings shall be recorded.

PLEASE NOTE: Documents and Bid Amounts initially publicized are based upon what has been provided by each bidder and serve to formalize that a public opening of bids or proposals occurred on the date identified. The information publicized is subject to change once the Purchasing Department and District division have reviewed the bids for accuracy. Publicized documents do not convey a notice of intended action. All bids or proposals received are subject to comprehensive review to determine responsiveness and responsibility.

Posting of Bid Award Recommendation

Once bids are evaluated and the purchasing department receives a recommendation for award from the requester, a *Notice of Intent to Award* will be posted on the [Purchasing Department](#) website.

Bidders are invited to visit our website to obtain this information. The purchasing department does not mail or e-mail Notices of Intent to Award to bidders as a standard practice. Once the Notice of Intent to Award will include bid tabulations published on the website above.

Bid Protests

A vendor who wishes to protest the bid specifications or the recommended award of a bid may do so by following procedures set forth

in 120.57(3) FS. A copy of this procedure is included in each bid document or can be obtained from our website. Only those vendors who submit a bid or a NO BID are eligible to protest the award of a bid.

AWARD POLICY

Awards will be made to the *lowest, responsive and responsible bidder*. Bids must be submitted on the required forms furnished with the bid documents for your bid to be considered *responsive*. The school board reserves the right to accept or reject any and all bids.

SPECIFICATIONS

The school district shall establish specific quality and performance standards for goods, equipment and services, based upon the needs of its customers. Often it is necessary to seek assistance in the development of these specifications from vendors. Although such assistance is valuable and greatly appreciated, no preferential treatment can be given in return for such services. Vendors who assist with the development of a specification will not be permitted to bid on that solicitation.

METHODS OF PURCHASE

Purchase Orders

The traditional and most commonly used document issued either by the district's purchasing department or by individual schools is the purchase order. To differentiate between the district's purchase order form and all others, look for an ivory-colored document listing the purchasing department's name and address at the top.

NOTE: Vendors are not authorized to ship materials or provide services before obtaining a printed, original purchase order from Purchasing Department. In the event of an emergency, a purchase order number may be telephoned, or emailed to the vendor to authorize shipment of materials or work to commence, but in all instances, a confirming printed purchase order will follow by email. Failure to obtain a purchase order in advance may result in the vendor being denied payment.

Purchasing Cards

Certain employees are authorized to use a purchasing card to purchase materials. Transactions of this type are tax exempt and will always be made for official district use only. The district's sales tax exemption number is imprinted on the face of the card.

1099 REPORTING

Before a purchase order can be issued, new vendors must submit an original copy of a completed W-9 Form to the Accounts Payable Department, P.O. Box 2942, Largo, FL, 33779-2942. This information is needed to enable us to establish a vendor record in our computer system and for [IRS 1099](#) reporting purposes.

ANTI-COMPETITIVE PRACTICES

Vendors are hereby notified that the purchasing department cooperates fully with the Florida attorneys general to monitor all procurement activities for anticompetitive practices, such as price fixing, bid rigging, collusion, etc..

BUSINESS ENTERPRISES OWNED BY WOMEN OR MINORITIES

The Pinellas County School Board does not currently offer bid preferences or set-asides to minority-owned or women-owned business enterprises. However, the purchasing department participates with other local governmental agencies, educational institutions, the NAACP, The Florida Minority Supplier Development Council (FMSDC) and Chambers of Commerce in a comprehensive outreach program to encourage minority vendor participation and to foster awareness of policies and procedures.

CERTIFICATE REGARDING DEBARMENT FORM AD-1048

A completed Form AD-1048 must be obtained from each vendor in advance of issuing a purchase order for all aggregate purchases of \$50,000 or more utilizing federal funds. Each bid invitation packet will include this form for your convenience, which should be returned with your bid proposal. Only one form is required for each approved bid.

FLORIDA STATE CONTRACTS

State contracts are issued by the State of Florida, Department of Management Services, Division of Purchasing, for use by ALL Florida state agencies and political subdivisions. The district receives and considers the prices available from such contracts whenever it is determined to be in its best interest.

BID "PIGGY-BACKING"

In lieu of seeking competitive bids and by mutual consent of the district and the vendor, the district shall have the option to purchase under current contracts from other governmental agencies, school districts or other educational institutions at the unit prices offered in their bid documents, if such purchase prices are to the economic advantage of the district.

EQUIPMENT or MATERIALS ORDERED "ON APPROVAL"

Vendors may offer demonstration or loaner equipment, software, etc., for evaluation by district employees "on approval." However, such action will not legally bind or obligate the district to purchase these items. If a district employee wishes to evaluate a product and requests to have it shipped "on approval," the vendor first must obtain a purchase order number, in advance, to authorize the shipment. If the requester decides to return the product to the vendor, the purchase order will be canceled without obligation.

PAYMENTS

The original invoice, referencing the purchase order number, should be emailed directly to: Pinellas County School Board Accounts Payable Department at AccountPayable@pcsb.org

Under normal circumstances, payments will be completed within 30 days of receipt of goods and a proper invoice.

TAX EXEMPTION STATUS

The Pinellas County School Board is a government agency and is exempt from certain taxes. The district's sales tax exemption number is preprinted on every purchase order. A copy of the [district's sales tax exemption certificate](#) is

available on the district's Purchasing Department website. The district's FEIN is 59-6000799.

SCHOOL BOARD

School board meetings are open to the public and are normally held the second and fourth Tuesday of every month in the Conference Hall at the Largo Administration Building, beginning at either 10 a.m. or 5 p.m. Exceptions may occur during summer months and when the meeting schedule is modified to accommodate holidays. Exact dates and times for the current year are available at the District's [School Board website](#) or by calling either the purchasing department, (727) 588-6143, or the school board office, (727) 588-6300.

GOVERNING REGULATIONS

All purchases and rules of conduct are governed by the following regulations:

- State Board Rules
6A-1.012:
(www.firn.edu/doe/rules)
- Florida Statutes:
FS 112.313(3), 112.3143(3)(a), 119.07,
120.57(3), 215.84, 287.055, 1000-1013
(www.leg.state.fl.us)
- Federal Regulations:
2CFR Part 200 317-326
- School Board Policies:
6320, 6330, 6462, 6464, 6320 & 8540

<http://pcsb.org/site/Default.aspx?PageID=2784>

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