FORWARD

The purpose of this guide is to acquaint you and other representatives who sell to the District with the procedures followed by the Procurement Department in administering the purchasing activities for the Little Rock School District. Familiarity with the purchasing procedures will aid you in presenting your products or services to the District. It will also help promote efficiencies in the operation of the Procurement Office.

This is a general guide and as such may not answer all questions that you may have. If you have questions that are not answered within this guide, please contact:

Procurement and Materials Management
Little Rock School District
Little Rock, Ark. 72202
501-447-2260

Welcome!

We realize that for many of you the Procurement Department is your initial contact with the Little Rock School District. This guide has been prepared to acquaint you with the District's policies and procedures in an effort to make your business and visits with us pleasant and mutually beneficial.

Procurement Role

Our responsibilities are dictated by policy and include the acquisition of goods, equipment and services for all schools and departments. We strive to acquire the quality, quantity and delivery required by schools and departments at the least overall cost to the District while providing opportunities to all interested vendors.

The District operates a centralized procurement department and we ask that when you call on the District, you make Procurement your first point of contact. We will arrange contacts for you with various schools and departments when it is appropriate. If it is determined you should visit our schools and departments, a Vendor Visitation Authorization will be issued. The District DOES not allow “cold call” sales visits to our schools/departments.
Interviews and Appointments

We encourage sales interviews and ask that you call ahead of time to arrange for an appointment. Vendor appointments are preferred and will help you to complete your business with a minimum of lost opportunity. We suggest that initial visits be somewhat general, giving us an introduction to you and your product lines. Subsequent visits are ideal opportunities to explain in detail a single item or service that you provide. Product information, catalogs and price lists are always helpful.

Vendor Register

The Procurement Department maintains a list of qualified vendors and bidders classified by commodity or service. This list is used as a source whenever the District is searching for appropriate suppliers. The district has contracted with Ionwave to provide electronic notification of bid opportunities to all vendors who have registered. We encourage vendors to register by going to the following link: https://lrsd.ionwave.net/VendorRegistration/PreliminaryInfo.aspx. To assure that you are included under all of the appropriate categories, we ask that you be specific about the commodities including services that you provide. In that the District does not routinely advertise bid invitations publicly, it is important that vendors keep their information in our files current. You will automatically receive e-mail bid invitations prepared by the District for those commodities for which you have registered. If you have questions about the vendor registration process, call our Vendor Specialist at 501-447-2285.

Procurement Bidding Policy

Competitive bidding shall be the standard method of purchasing in all instances in which it is feasible, advantageous, or in the best interest of the District. Following is a summary of the district's bidding policy:

1. Open Market Purchases: Purchases expected to cost up to the state bid limit may be accomplished with no competitive bidding required. These purchases are considered "open market" in that we encourage our users to search the market for the best deal but no written documentation is required. The District encourages its staff to use their issued VISA procurement card (Pro Card) for purchases of $1,000 or less.

2. Competitive Bidding: In accordance with state law (see Arkansas Code Annotated 6-21-301:306), bidding is required when the estimated cost of the procurement equals or exceeds the threshold established annually by the Arkansas Department of Education and involves the issuance of an Invitation For Bids (IFB) or a Request For Proposals (RFP).

   a. Invitation For Bids (IFB): IFB's are e-mailed to all known prospective and registered vendors, containing item description and all contractual terms and conditions applicable to the procurement. Bids are publicly opened and read aloud at the date and time specified in the IFB and awards are made to the responsive and responsible bidder who
has submitted the lowest bid that meets the requirements and criteria set forth in the bid invitation.

b. Request For Proposals (RFP): Formal competitive proposals are generally solicited in lieu of IFB's when criteria factors other than price are to be considered. The proposals are sealed by the vendor and delivered to the designated address by the designated time. Unlike IFB's, RFP's do not require a public reading and allow for negotiations after opening. Precautions must be taken to avoid disclosure of contents of competing proposals in the event follow-up negotiations are needed. Proposals will be accessible to the public after awarding.

Under either method above, an official approved purchase order or contract will be issued to the successful bidder.

3. Procurement of Professional/Consulting Services: These services are defined by state law (see Arkansas Code Annotated 19-11-801:805). The statutes require that procurement of these services shall be accomplished through contract negotiation, as opposed to competitive bidding. Selection is made on the basis of demonstrated competence and qualifications for the type of services required and at fair and reasonable prices. In most cases, the District will issue an RFQ (Request For Qualifications) for these services but may select from qualified registered vendors on file with the District.

District Approved Purchase Processes:

1. Procurement card (Pro-Card)
The District has issued procurement cards (Pro-Cards) to various employees. The Pro-Card is a Visa credit card issued by US Bank and provides our users with a tool to make allowable, small dollar purchases of $1,000 or less. We encourage vendors to check cardholder ID.

2. Regular District Purchase Orders
A pre-numbered purchase order issued to the vendor by the District's Procurement Department for expenditures over $1,000 OR under $1,000 where the Pro-Card is not used. This form is signed by the District Director of Procurement or his designee and is the primary method for ordering or contracting for goods and most services. A copy of the purchase order is presented to the vendor and is the authority to ship/deliver the goods/services ordered.

3. Contracts
The District may use contracts in lieu of purchase orders in those cases where warranted. Contracts must be signed by the Director of Procurement or his designee.

The Procurement Office must approve changes or modifications to contracts or purchase orders. Under no circumstances should a vendor fill an order or perform a service for any LRSD School, department or employee without first being provided a contract or a purchase order.
**Invoices and Deliveries**

All invoices should be addressed to:

**INVOICE@LRSD.ORG**

OR

Little Rock School District
Finance Department
810 West Markham
Little Rock, Ark. 72201

Invoices must identify the school or department that received the shipment and the purchase order number. Invoices that do not show the P.O. number will be returned to the shipper, causing delayed payment.

Deliveries must be made to the ship-to address designated on the purchase order. Packing slips or equivalent shipping documents must accompany every delivery and will be used to verify invoices.

**Applicable Taxes**

Federal excise taxes are not applicable to sales made to the Little Rock School District. Resident Arkansas vendors are responsible for the Arkansas state sales tax and for the city or county within which their business is located. We ask that you include the appropriate taxes on your invoices. Unless included in the invoice, the District pays the appropriate use tax directly to the state for all out of state purchases subject to Arkansas use tax.

**Conflicts, Gifts, and Gratuities**

Any attempt to realize personal gain through public appointment or employment by conduct inconsistent with the proper discharge of the employee's duties is a breach of the public trust. No official or employee of the District shall be interested financially in any contract or attempt to influence the outcome of any contract award of the District for personal gain. Also, suppliers and contractors are cautioned that communicating directly or indirectly with any LRSD official for the purpose of influencing the vendor selection or gaining favorable advantage in the award of a bid or contract is prohibited. Any action taken which may tend to degrade the integrity of the competitive procurement process will be considered grounds for disqualification.
Minority Business Enterprises (MBE) and Women Owned Business Enterprises (WBE)

It is the policy of the Little Rock School District to promote full and equal access to business opportunities with the Little Rock School District. Minority-owned, women owned, as well as other vendors, will have a fair and reasonable opportunity to participate in LRSD business opportunities.

The District has established spending goals of 10% of total purchases with MBE’s and 10% with WBE’s. More program details are available by reviewing District Board policy 7.5.1.

The District encourages minority and women owned small business vendors to contact the Procurement Department of the Little Rock School District for assistance in the methods of doing business with the District.