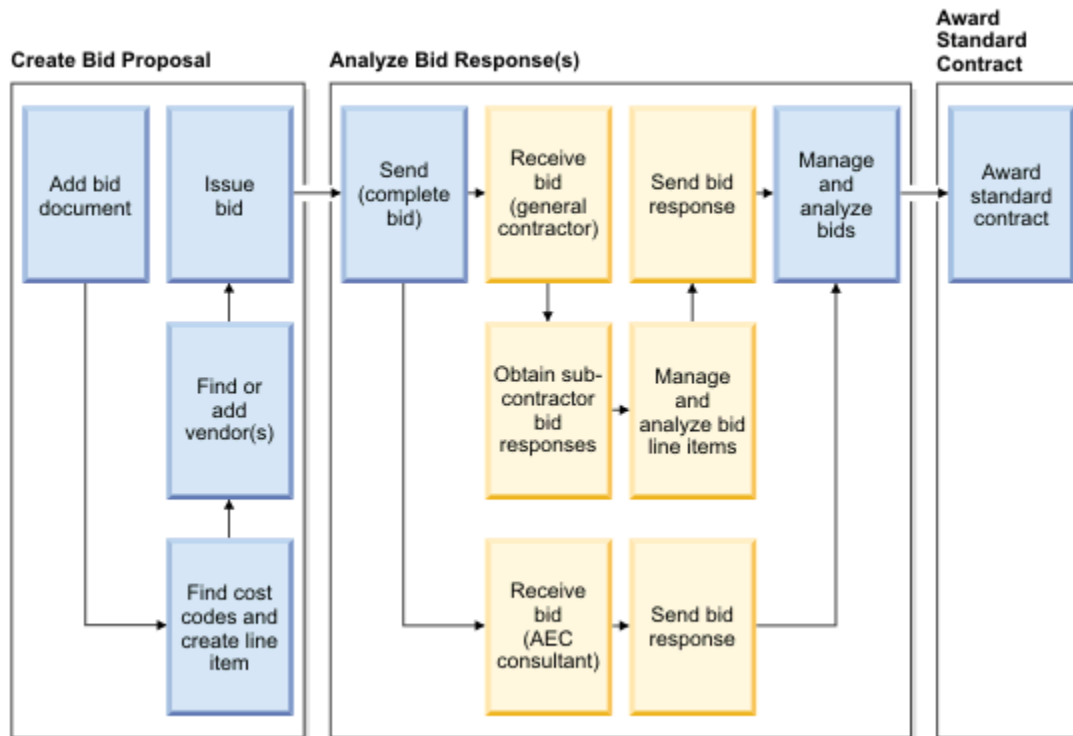


# The Bidding Process

Projects cannot be done “piecemeal” to avoid the dollar limitation.

The Purchasing Department is committed to building a comprehensive “Bidding Process” to ensure the success of the project. Some activities mentioned below may run concurrently. Purchasing will work with all departments or schools throughout the entire RFP process. To reach the Purchasing Department email [grp-purchasing@cpsboe.k12.oh.us](mailto:grp-purchasing@cpsboe.k12.oh.us) or via phone 513-363-0460.

## Bidding Process Swim Lane



## Steps for the Bidding Process

### Step 1 – Create Bid Proposals

- a) The Project Manager (PM) or Department Head (DH) will submit a “Request For Proposal” Processing Form, and within 1-2 days a Purchasing Agent will reach out to the PM or DH to define a feasible RFP schedule.
- b) If bidding is not feasible, the Buyer will seek other methods to ensure fair and reasonable pricing including, Cooperative Purchasing, price quotations, price comparison, etc. When circumstances warrant the solicitation of competitive bids inappropriate, the Buyer shall document the facts and will issue recommendations.

- c) The Buyer will coordinate efforts with a PM or DH when compiling documentation when a bid is being prepared to be placed for solicitation. The Buyer and PM or DH will determine a tentative Board Date, and work backwards to establish a timeline to complete the entire “RFP”. The timeline is established using the “Bidding Procedure Time Duration” document.
- d) The Buyer will coordinate efforts with a PM or DH to complete an “IONWAVE Template” that will give the format of the RFP which is the scope of work, deliverables, evaluation and scoring, and any general information that a bidder will need to bid on the RFP. Also, if responses are conformed to a certain format, this should be indicated. The Requester/Buyer must be thorough and address all known variables.
- e) The Buyer will coordinate efforts with a PM or DH on setting up the evaluation section within the IONWAVE Bidding Software.
- f) The Buyer will ensure that provided specifications do not restrict competition or preclude the most economical purchases of the required items, and/or is in the best interest of the District

**Steps 2 – Analyze Bid Response(s)**

- g) The Buyer will review the “IONWAVE Template” with the PM or DH, before creating a RFP in the IONWAVE Bidding Software.
- h) After the published bid date, all bids that have been received, and deemed responsive will be examined for completeness. The information gathered will be retained on file. A summary is to be prepared noting all the pertinent data and discrepancies. An email will be sent to the “Evaluation Team” to evaluate the bids submitted in the IONWAVE Software.
- i) The Buyer will determine the qualification of vendors that have responded to all solicitation with the District. The financial condition of the company, its ability to perform, and its facilities should be part of the criteria for an acceptable vendor to receive a contract award.
- j) If a pre-bid meeting is offered for a proposal, Purchasing, PM, and DH will meet to determine the logistics/detail of the meeting, and whether it is mandatory or optional for the vendor to attend.
- k) Certified Minority Suppliers will be counted toward achievement in the scoring process within the RFP. (See Appendix B)
- l) When a Supplier proposes an alternative that is equal to Bid specifications, it is the responsibility of the Buyer to determine, and document whether the proposed substitution is, in fact, an equal. Such decisions will be based on evaluation and concurrences of both the Buyer and the PM or DH.
- m) If the solicitation response is deemed inadequate, the District reserves the right to re-solicit for competitive bids. In the case of proprietary items, competition is often not possible and should be noted on the purchase requisition/order.

- n) Purchasing will post addendums to the district website when applicable. Vendors are required to check the district website for any addendum prior to closing of the bid.
- o) Purchasing must coordinate all responses to vendor queries and ensure all potential vendors are provided the same information. The buyer will consult with the PM or DH, or a subject matter expert prior to answering technical questions arising during the bid.
- p) If the solicitation requires “Bid Guarantee”, click “[HERE](#)” to view the procedures. Construction projects may require a vendor to supply bid surety for the projects over a dollar threshold of \$150,000.
- q) Responses determined to be non-responsive, i.e. Received after bid close, non-conforming responses, will be logged as non-responsive with Rationale. The Buyer will seek concurrence with the PM, DH, and legal prior to notification to non-responsive bidder.
- r) Cincinnati Public Schools reserves the right to reject all solicitations, waive formalities, and contract terms in the best interest of the District.
- s) Purchasing will work with the Source Selection Committee on determining the best responses to award the bid. The PM or DH will provide Purchasing with the bid tabulation, and funding code for the Treasurer's Report.

### **Step 3 – Award Standard Contract**

- t) Purchasing will check the State Auditor’s site for Findings and Recovery (eVas) for the awarded vendor to see if there are any outstanding issues which would preclude them from being awarded the PO/contract. Print a copy, initial, and add to the file.
- u) Report awarded contractor as an Award of PO or Award of Contract depending on the awarded bid. The PM/DH will create a contract requisition, and select the type of purchase within the financial system. Board approval is needed for all purchases over \$50,000.
- v) Purchasing will send out award and non-award letters to vendors. Once the Board has approved the contract/PO, if applicable, send notification to Surety to convert the Bid Bond to Performance Bond. If additional documentation is needed send reminder letters as required.
- w) Contracts are sent electronically through RightSignature (an electronic signature software) to the vendor, Treasurer, and PM or DH. The approximation to receive a fully executed contract is 45 days.
- x) The Purchasing Department website will be updated to advise of the bid award, and including the Purchasing contact for questions.

## Cincinnati Public Schools Minority Vendor Opportunity

Cincinnati Public Schools (CPS) is seeking to forge innovative partnerships with certified Minority and Women Owned Business Vendors (M/WBE) to help increase the participation of all contracted and procurement dollars spent on an annual basis. CPS will provide the most efficient use of taxpayer dollars, while at the same time provide the best quality service and support to our students, teachers, staff, parents and community. A vital part of this effort is the development and strength of partnering with our Minority vendors.

In our effort to identify you and your capabilities, we encourage you to do business with our district by registering in the Purchasing Bidding Software, located on CPS website [www.cps-k12.org](http://www.cps-k12.org), under “About CPS”, and clicking on “Doing Business with CPS”. Once registered, the Supplier list within the bidding system is reviewed by the Buyer’s prior to soliciting bids. The advantage of registering in the Bidding Software is that it increases the potential for a vendor being notified of our competitive bids and quotes. Review the “[Vendor Registration Page](#)” for more information.

### **Vendors Can Assist CPS with Increasing (M/WBE) Participation by:**

- Getting Certified: This is a distinguishing aspect of doing business with CPS. It’s critical to keep your certification up-to-date, and receive your certification from a credible place.
  - Greater Cincinnati Urban League, African American Chambers of Commerce, City of Cincinnati Business Certification Programs, Women’s Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC), and Ohio Department of Administrative Services (MBE & EDGE) are a few credible programs that CPS will accept certifications.
- Being Prepared: This cannot be overstated. Most departments will require a quote to be submitted for purchases over \$10,000, and competitive bids over \$100,000. Be sure to prepare a quote or bid that considers the needs of your business and CPS.
  - All quotes need to have the quantity, description of service or goods, labeled quote,
- Consider partnering with larger organizations and/or agencies on large contracts.
- Being certain your business can handle the project scope, have adequate capabilities, and the ability to be flexible.
- Being Innovative: Using a creative solution-based approach with potential departments may help you stand out.
- Registering for our bi-annual “Minority Pitch Event” (announcements will be posted on the CPS website under “Doing Business with CPS”).

A “**Purchase Order**” is considered the contract/fiscal office certificate to approve purchase commitments and to encumber funds against the applicable appropriation account(s) as required by division (D) of section 5705.41 of the Ohio Revised Code. Every such contract made without such a certificate number shall be void, and no warrant shall be issued in payment of amount due thereon.

- Do not begin or deliver products, without an official Purchase Order bearing the signature of the CPS Treasurer/CFO. This document is the CPS acknowledgement, contract and commitment for the work/services or delivery of products.

Upon completion of work (or at previously agreed upon intervals) you must submit an invoice in order to be paid. All invoices must include a valid purchase order number. Submit invoices for payment to the Office of the Treasurer, P. O. Box 5384, Cincinnati, OH 45201. This will ensure that proper payment is given within the time allotted on CPS’ Terms and Conditions.