

Regulation 3311: Bids

Status: DRAFT

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Advertised Bids

Whenever letting contracts exceeding the informal bid limit as specified in Public Contract Code 20111, 20112 and 22032, the Superintendent/designee shall call for bids by advertising in a local newspaper at least once a week for two weeks. Unless otherwise authorized by law, contracts shall be let to the lowest responsible bidder who shall give such security as the Governing Board requires, or else all bids shall be rejected. (Public Contract Code 20111, 20112, 22032)

When letting a contract for the procurement and/or maintenance of electronic data processing systems and supporting software, the Board may contract with any one of the three lowest bidders. (Public Contract Code 20118.1)

The Board shall secure bids pursuant to Public Contract Code 20111 and 20112 for any transportation service expenditure exceeding the bid limit as specified in Education Code 39802 when contemplating that such a contract may be made with a person or corporation other than a common carrier, municipally-owned transit system or a parent/guardian of students who are to be transported. The Board may let his contract to other than the lowest bidder. (Education Code 39802)

No work, project, service or purchase shall be split or separated into smaller work orders or projects for the purpose of evading the legal requirements of Public Contract Code 20111-20118.4 for contracting after competitive bidding. (Public Contract Code 20116)

Instructions and Procedures for Advertised Bids

The notice shall contain the time, date and location of any mandatory prebid conference, site visit or meeting. The notice shall also detail when and where project documents, including final plan and specifications, are available. Any such mandatory visit or meeting shall not occur within a minimum of five calendar days of the publication of the initial notice. (Public Contract Code 6610)

Bid instructions and specifications shall include the following requirements and information:

1. All bidders, including bidders for printing contracts, shall specify the minimum, if not exact, percentage of recycled product in the products offered, and both the post-consumer and secondary waste content. (Public Contract Code 12169, 12213)

2. All bids for construction work shall be presented under sealed cover and shall be accompanied by one of the following forms of bidder's security: (Public Contract Code 20107, 20111)

a. Cash

b. A cashier's check made payable to the district.

c. A certified check made payable to the district.

d. A bidder's bond executed by an admitted surety insurer and made payable to the district.

3. The security of unsuccessful bidders shall be returned in a reasonable period of time, in no event any later than 60 days after the bid is awarded. (Public Contract Code 20111)

4. Under no condition shall bids be accepted after the advertised bid opening time, regardless of whether the bids are actually opened at that time. (Public Contract Code 20112)

5. When two or more identical lowest or highest bids are received, the Board may determine by lot which bid shall be accepted. (Public Contract Code 20117)

6. If the district requires that the bid include prices for items that may be added to or deducted from the scope of work in the contract, depending on the availability of funds, the bid solicitation shall specify which one of the following methods will be used to determine the lowest bid. In the absence of such a specification, only the method provided in Item No. a, below, will be used: (Public Contract Code 20103.8)

a. The lowest bid shall be the lowest bid price on the base contract without consideration of the prices on the additive or deductive items.

b. The lowest bid shall be the lowest total of the bid prices on the base contract and those additive or deductive items that were specifically identified in the bid solicitation as being used for the purpose of determining the lowest bid price.

c. The lowest bid shall be the lowest total of the bid prices on the base contract and those additive or deductive items taken in order from a specifically identified list of those items, depending on available funds as identified in the solicitation.

d. The lowest bid shall be determined in a manner that prevents any information that would identify any of the bidders from being revealed to the public entity before ranking of all bidders from lowest to highest has been determined.

7. Any subsequent change or alteration of a contract shall be governed by the provisions of Public Contract Code 20118.4.

8. After being opened, all submitted bids become public records pursuant to Government Code 6252 and shall be made available for review pursuant to law, Board policy and administrative regulation.

(cf. 1340 – Access to District Records)

Bids Not Required

Upon determination that it is in the best interest of the district, the Board may authorize the purchase, lease or contract for data processing equipment, purchase materials, supplies, equipment, automotive vehicles, tractors and other personal property through a public corporation or agency ("piggyback") without advertising for bids. (Public Contract Code 20118)

(cf. 3300 – Expenditures and Purchasing)

Supplementary textbooks, library books, periodicals, educational films, audiovisual materials, test materials, workbooks and instruction computer software packages may be purchased in any amount without taking estimates for advertised bids. (Public Contract Code 20118.3)

The district may, upon a case-by-case determination of the Board, purchase, lease or contract for equipment and supplies through a public corporation without advertised bids to the extent permitted by state law. (Public Contract Code 20118)

Perishable commodities such as foodstuffs can be purchased through bid or on the open market, depending on district preference. (Education Code 38083) In its purchases, the District shall give preference to products grown, manufactured or produced in California and to foods grown or processed in the United States. (Government Code 4331, Public Contract Code 3410)

(cf. 3551 – Food Services Operations/Cafeteria Fund)

In an emergency when any repairs, alterations, work or improvement to any school facility is necessary to permit the continuance of existing school classes, or to avoid danger to life or property, the Board, by unanimous vote and with the approval of the County Superintendent of Schools, may contract for labor and materials or supplies without advertising for or inviting bids. (Public Contract Code 20113)

(cf. 9323.2 – Actions by the Board)

Bids shall also not be required for day labor under circumstances specified by law. Day labor shall include the use of maintenance personnel employed on a permanent or temporary basis. (Public Contract Code 20114)

Whenever the total number of hours on the job does not exceed 350 hours, day labor may be used to erect new buildings and for the following purposes: (Public Contract Code 20114)

1. School building repairs, alterations, additions

2. Painting, repainting or decorating of school buildings

3. Repair or building of apparatus or equipment

4. Improvements on school grounds

5. Maintenance work as defined above

Sole Sourcing

Specifications for construction, alteration or repair of school facilities may not limit bidding to any one product or supplier. Specifications designating a particular brand name shall follow the description with the words "or equal." (Public Contract Code 3400)

Specifications for contracts may designate a product by brand or trade name (sole sourcing) when one or more of the following conditions apply: (Public Contract Code 3400)

1. The product is designated to match others in use on a particular public improvement that has been completed or is in the course of completion.
2. One product has a unique application required to be used in the public interest.
3. Only one brand or trade name is known.
4. Upon resolution of the Board, the Board makes a finding that the item sought is the subject of a field test to determine its suitability for future use.

Prequalification Procedure

For any contract for which bids are legally required, the Board may require that each prospective bidder complete and submit a standardized questionnaire and financial statement. For this purpose, the Superintendent/designee shall supply a form which includes a complete statement of the bidder's financial ability and experience in performing public works. Prospective bidders shall submit the questionnaire and financial statement at least five days before the date fixed for public opening of sealed bids. The questionnaire and financial statement shall be verified as prescribed by law. The questionnaire and financial statements shall not be public records and shall not be open to public inspections. (Public Contract Code 20111.5)

The Superintendent/designee shall establish a uniform system for rating bidders on the basis of completed questionnaires and financial statements in order to determine the size of contracts on which each bidder is qualified to bid. Bidders must be deemed prequalified by the district at least one day before the fixed bid opening date. (Public Contract Code 20111.5)

The Superintendent/designee shall furnish each qualified bidder with a standardized proposal form. Bids not presented on the standard form shall be disregarded. (Public Contract Code 20111.5)

The district may establish a procedure for prequalifying bidders on a quarterly bases and may authorize that prequalification be considered valid for up to one calendar year following the date of initial prequalification. (Public Contract Code 20111.5)

Advertised/Competitive Bids

The district shall advertise for any of the following: (Public Contract Code 20111)

1. A public project contract that involves an expenditure of \$15,000 or more, including a contract for construction, reconstruction, erection, alteration, renovation, improvement, painting, repainting, demolition, or repair work involving a district owned, leased, or operated facility
2. A contract that exceeds the amount specified in law, as annually adjusted by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, for any of the following:
 - a. The purchase of equipment, materials, or supplies to be furnished, sold, or leased to the district
 - b. Services, not including construction services or special services and advice in accounting, financial, legal, or administrative matters

c. Repairs that are not a public project, including maintenance

Maintenance means routine, recurring, and usual work for preserving, protecting, and keeping a district facility operating in a safe, efficient, and continually usable condition for the intended purpose for which it was designed, improved, constructed, altered, or repaired. Maintenance includes, but is not limited to, carpentry, electrical, plumbing, glazing, and other craft work designed to preserve the facility, as well as repairs, cleaning, and other operations on machinery and other permanently attached equipment. Maintenance does not include painting, repainting, or decorating other than touchup, or among other types of work, janitorial or custodial services and protection provided by security forces. (Public Contract Code 20115)

Instructions and Procedures for Advertised Bids

The Superintendent or designee shall call for bids by placing a notice at least once a week for two weeks in a local newspaper of general circulation published in the district, or if no such newspaper exists, then in some newspaper of general circulation that is circulated in the county. The Superintendent or designee also may post the notice on the district's website or through an electronic portal. The notice shall state the work to be done or materials or supplies to be furnished and the time and place and website where bids will be opened. (Public Contract Code 20112)

The notice shall contain the time, date, and location of any mandatory prebid conference, site visit, or meeting and details regarding when and where project documents, including the final plan and specifications, are available. Any such mandatory visit or meeting shall occur not less than five calendar days after the publication of the initial notice. For lease-leaseback, design-build, and alternative design-build projects, the notice shall specify that the project is subject to skilled and trained workforce requirements. (Education Code 17250.25, 17250.62, 17407.5; Public Contract Code 2600, 6610)

Bid instructions and specifications shall include the following requirements and information:

1. All bidders shall certify in writing the minimum, if not exact, percentage of post-consumer materials in products, materials, goods, or supplies offered or sold. (Public Contract Code 22152)
2. All bids for construction work shall be presented under sealed cover. The district may accept a bid that has been submitted electronically or on paper. (Public Contract Code 20111, 20112)

The bid shall be accompanied by a form of bidder's security, including either cash, a cashier's check payable to the district, a certified check made payable to the district, or a bidder's bond executed by an admitted surety insurer and made payable to the district. The security of unsuccessful bidders shall be returned in a reasonable period of time, but in no event later than 60 days after the bid is awarded. (Public Contract Code 20111, 20112)

3. When a standardized proposal form is provided by the district, bids not presented on the standard form shall be disregarded. (Public Contract Code 20111.5)
4. Bids shall not be accepted after the advertised bid opening time, regardless of whether the bids are actually opened at that time. (Public Contract Code 20112)
5. When two or more identical lowest or highest bids are received, the Governing Board may determine by lot which bid shall be accepted. (Public Contract Code 20117)
6. If the district requires that the bid include prices for items that may be added to or deducted from the scope of work in the contract, the bid solicitation shall specify which one of the following methods will be used to determine the lowest bid. In the absence of such a specification, only the method provided in Item #6a below shall be used. (Public Contract Code 20103.8)
 - a. The lowest bid shall be the lowest total of the bid prices on the base contract without consideration of the prices on the additive or deductive items.
 - b. The lowest bid shall be the lowest total of the bid prices on the base contract and those additive or

deductive items that were specifically identified in the bid solicitation as being used for the purpose of determining the lowest bid price.

- c. The lowest bid shall be the lowest total of the bid prices on the base contract and those additive or deductive items that, when taken in order from a specifically identified list of those items in the solicitation, and added to or subtracted from the base contract, are less than or equal to a funding amount publicly disclosed by the district before the first bid is opened.

The lowest bid shall be determined in a manner that prevents any information that would identify any of the bidders or proposed subcontractors or suppliers from being revealed to the district before the ranking of all bidders from lowest to highest has been determined. (Public Contract Code 20103.8)

7. In determining the lowest bid, the district shall consider only responsive bids that conform to bid specifications and are submitted by responsible bidders who have demonstrated trustworthiness, quality, fitness, capacity, and experience to satisfactorily perform the public works contract.
 - a. When a bid is determined to be nonresponsive, the Superintendent or designee shall notify the bidder and give the bidder an opportunity to respond to the determination
 - b. When the lowest bidder is determined to be nonresponsive, the Superintendent or designee shall notify the bidder of the right to present evidence of the bidder's responsibility at a hearing before the Board.
8. After being opened, all submitted bids become public records pursuant to Government Code 7920.530 and shall be made available for public review pursuant to law, Board policy, and administrative regulation.

Prequalification Procedure

When required by law or the Board, the Superintendent or designee shall establish a uniform system for rating bidders on the basis of completed questionnaires and financial statements in order to determine the size of contracts on which each bidder is qualified to bid. For this purpose, the Superintendent or designee shall furnish prospective bidders a standardized prequalification questionnaire and financial record which, when completed, shall indicate a bidder's statement of financial ability and experience in performing public works. The bidder's information shall be verified under oath in the manner in which civil law pleadings are verified. The questionnaires and financial statements shall not be public records and shall not be open to public inspection. (Code of Civil Procedure 446; Public Contract Code 20111.5, 20111.6)

When any public project involves an expenditure of \$1,000,000 or more and is funded or reimbursed wholly or partly by the School Facilities Program funds or other future state school bond, the district shall prequalify prospective bidders either quarterly or annually. The prequalification shall be valid for one year and the following requirements shall apply: (Public Contract Code 20111.6)

1. Prospective bidders, including, but not limited to, prime, general engineering, and general building contractors and electrical, mechanical, and plumbing subcontractors, as defined in Public Contract Code 4113 or Business and Professions Code 7056 or 7057, as applicable, shall submit a standardized questionnaire and financial statement 10 or more business days, as determined by the district, before the date fixed for the public opening of sealed bids.
2. Prospective bidders shall be prequalified by the district five or more business days, as determined by the district, before the date fixed for the public opening of sealed bids.

If the project includes electrical, mechanical, or plumbing components that will be performed by electrical, mechanical, or plumbing contractors, the Superintendent or designee shall make available to all bidders a list of prequalified general contractors and electrical, mechanical, and plumbing subcontractors five or more business days, as determined by the district, before the date fixed for the public opening of sealed bids. (Public Contract Code 20111.6)

For all other contracts requiring competitive bidding, the district may establish a procedure for prequalifying bidders on a quarterly basis and may authorize that prequalification be considered valid for up to one calendar year following

the date of the initial prequalification. Prospective bidders for such contracts shall submit the questionnaire and financial statement at least five days before the date fixed for public opening of sealed bids and shall be prequalified by the district at least one day before the fixed bid-opening date. (Public Contract Code 20111.5)

Award of Contract

The district shall award each contract to the lowest responsible bidder, except in the following circumstances:

1. When the contract is for the procurement and/or maintenance of electronic data processing systems and supporting software, in which case the Board may contract with any one of the three lowest responsible bidders (Public Contract Code 20118.1)
2. When the contract is for any transportation service which involves an expenditure of more than \$10,000 and which will be made with any person or corporation other than a common carrier, municipally owned transit system, or a parent/guardian of a student who is to be transported, in which case the Board may contract with other than the lowest bidder (Education Code 39802)
3. When the contract is one for which the Board has established goals and requirements relating to participation of disabled veteran or small business enterprises in accordance with Public Contract Code 2000-2002, in which case the Board may contract with the lowest responsible bidder who submits a responsive bid and complies or makes a good faith effort to comply with the goals and requirements (Public Contract Code 2000-2002)
4. When procuring a lease-leaseback contract, in which case the Board shall award the contract based on objective criteria for determining the best combination of price and qualifications in accordance with Education Code 17400 and 17406
5. When procuring a design-build contract for a public works project in excess of \$1,000,000 in accordance with Education Code 17250.20, in which case the Board may award the contract to either the low bid or the best value to the district, taking into consideration, at a minimum, price, technical design and construction expertise, and life-cycle costs (Education Code 17250.20, 17250.25)
6. When procuring an alternative design-build contract for a public works project in excess of \$5,000,000 in accordance with Education Code 17250.62, in which case the Board may award the contract to either the low bid or the best value, taking into consideration, at a minimum design cost, general conditions, overhead, and profit as a component of the project price; technical design and construction expertise; and life-cycle costs (Education Code 17250.61, 17250.62)

Protests by Bidders

If the bidder believes that the award is not in compliance with law, Board policy, or the bid specification, the bidder may protest the award. A protest must be filed in writing with the Superintendent or designee within five working days after receipt of notification of the proposed contract award and shall include all documents supporting or justifying the protest. A bidder's failure to file the protested documents in a timely manner shall constitute a waiver of the right to protest the award of the contract.

The Superintendent or designee shall review the documents submitted with the bidder's claims and render a decision in writing within 30 working days. The Superintendent or designee may also convene a meeting with the bidder in order to attempt to resolve the problem.

The bidder may appeal the Superintendent or designee's decision to the Board. The Superintendent or designee shall provide notice to the bidder of the date and time for Board consideration of the protest at least three business days before the Board meeting. The Board's decision shall be final.

Limitation on Use of Sole Sourcing

In any contract for the construction, alteration, or repair of school facilities, the Superintendent or designee shall ensure that the bid specification: (Public Contract Code 3002, 3400)

1. Does not directly or indirectly limit bidding to any one specific concern
2. Does not call for a designated material, product, thing, or service by a specific brand or trade name, unless the specification is followed by the words "or equal," so that bidders may furnish any equal material, product, thing, or service

In any such case, the bid specification shall provide a time period, before and/or after the award of the contract, for the contractor to submit data substantiating the request for substituting the designated material, product, thing, or service. If no such time period is specified, the contractor may submit the data within 35 days after the award of the contract.

When the bid is for a roof project, a material, product, thing, or service is considered "equal" to that designated if it is equal in quality, durability, design, and appearance; will perform the intended function equally well; and conforms substantially to the detailed requirements in the bid specification. (Public Contract Code 3002)

However, the Superintendent or designee may designate a specific material, product, thing, or service by brand or trade name, also known as sole sourcing, if the Board has made a finding, described in the invitation for bids or request for proposals (RFP), that a particular material, product, thing, or service is designated for any of the following purposes: (Public Contract Code 3400)

1. To conduct a field test or experiment to determine its suitability for future use
2. To match others in use on a particular public improvement that has been completed or is in the course of completion
3. To obtain a necessary item that is only available from one source
4. To respond to the Board's declaration of an emergency, as long as the declaration has been approved by four-fifths of the Board when issuing the invitation for bid or RFP

Bids Not Required

Without advertising for bids and upon a determination that it is in the best interest of the district, the Board may "piggyback" by authorizing another public corporation or agency, by contract, lease, requisition, or purchase order, to lease data-processing equipment or to purchase materials, supplies, equipment, automotive vehicles, tractors, and other personal property for the district in the manner that the other public corporation or agency is authorized to make the leases or purchases from a vendor. Alternatively, if the public corporation or agency has an existing contract with a vendor for the lease or purchase of personal property, the district may authorize the lease or purchase of personal property directly from the vendor and make payments under the same terms that are available to the public corporation or agency under the contract. (Public Contract Code 20118)

Without advertising for bids, the Board may enter into an energy service contract and any related facility ground lease, when it determines that the terms of the contract and lease are in the best interest of the district and meet the cost effectiveness requirements specified in Government Code 4217.12. The Board's determination shall be made at a regularly scheduled public hearing of which notice is given to the public at least two weeks in advance and shall be based on a cost and saving comparison finding specified in Government Code 4217.12. (Government Code 4217.12)

Supplementary textbooks, library books, educational films, audiovisual materials, test materials, workbooks, instructional computer software packages, or periodicals may be purchased in any amount without taking estimates or advertising for bids. (Public Contract Code 20118.3)

Perishable foodstuffs and seasonal commodities needed in the operations of cafeterias may be purchased through bid or on the open market. (Education Code 38083)

Bids shall not be required for day labor under circumstances specified in Public Contract Code 20114. Day labor shall include the use of maintenance personnel employed on a permanent or temporary basis. (Public Contract Code 20114)

In an emergency when any repairs, alterations, work, or improvement to any school facility is necessary to permit the continuance of existing school classes or to avoid danger to life or property, the Board may, by unanimous vote and with the approval of the County Superintendent of Schools, contract for labor and materials or supplies without advertising for or inviting bids or may authorize the use of day labor or force account for the emergency purpose. (Public Contract Code 1102, 20113)

The district may purchase any surplus property from the federal government or any of its agencies in any quantity needed for the operation of its schools without taking estimates or advertising for bids. (Education Code 17602)

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