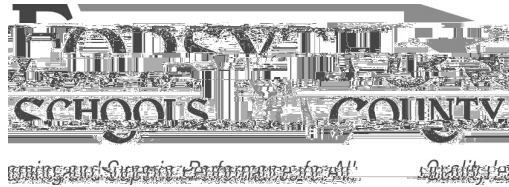


TEACHER

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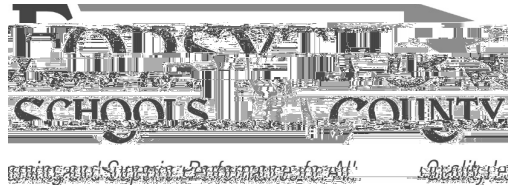
To All Interested Vendors,

Thank you for your interest in partnership with the Forsyth County School System. For those accustomed to working with governmental entities, you are aware of the differences between purchasing between the private sector and the public sector. For those who are just getting started in this arena, you will discover there are principles and sales methodologies that will increase your chances of earning sales opportunities within the public sector. The challenges are no greater than sales within the private sector; just different. At the same time, we think you will discover there are many advantages to partnering with a local government, in this case the Forsyth County School System.

It is for this reason that we offer this handbook. Even those familiar with governmental purchasing will find that while the overall principles are the same, there are often nuances and methods that differ from one government body to the other. Therefore, the intent of this manual is to allow all prospective vendors the opportunity to learn how the Forsyth County School System functions in order to maximize your opportunity for earning business. We have found that there is a direct and positive correlation between vendors that understand and implement public purchasing principles and those who are awarded contracts.

Our purchasing function takes seriously our obligation as stewards of public funds, as intermediaries between vendors and purchasing opportunities, and as stewards responsible for procuring the “best value” products and services necessary to support and enhance our primary function, which is the education of the children of Forsyth County. The convergence of these three essentials provides challenges and opportunities for everyone involved in the purchasing process.

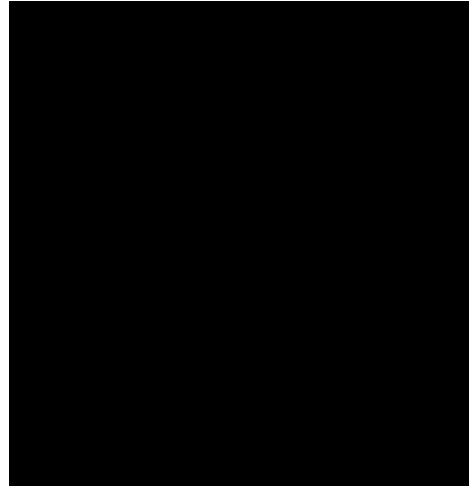
This handbook can not and does not encompass every detail of all the laws, regulations, and processes governing our purchasing function. However, it does provide the basic principles of our process, methods, and procis piowsow



Who We Are

FCS serves close to 50,000 students and is the largest employer in the county with over 7,600+ full /part-time employees and substitutes. Out of 181 school districts, FCS is the seventh largest school system in Georgia. FCS is home to 39 schools – 21 elementary, 10 middle, 6 high schools, as well as houses Gateway Academy, Forsyth Academy and Forsyth Virtual Academy.

The Purchasing Department exists to serve and support each school and core department in the procurement of “best value” products and services necessary to drive the educational process of our system.



What We Believe

Vision Statement:

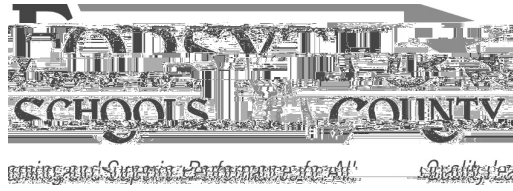
To make a positive impact while becoming a recognized leader in governmental purchasing within the service of the Forsyth County School System and the field of public education.

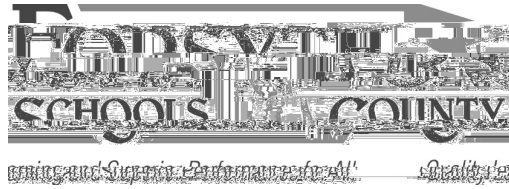
Mission Statement:

Our Mission is to support all Forsyth County School System stakeholders in the educational process by facilitating the purchase of quality goods and services through the use of cost effective, legal, ethical, and sound purchasing practices.

Core Values:

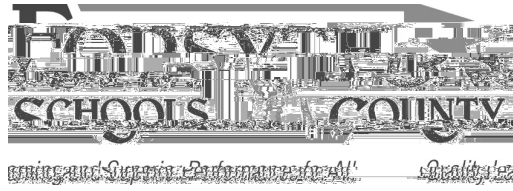
- x **Honesty and Integrity:** Protect the integrity of the purchasing function of FCS by performing all job tasks in an accurate, open and truthful manner.
- x **Trust and Respect:** Base all internal and external relationships on trust and mutual respect.
- x **Service:** Strive to identify and meet the needs of all FCS stakeholders with responsive, courteous and professional customer service.
- x **Accountability and Responsibility:** Act responsibly in all endeavors and be accountable for the actions performed in the expenditure of taxpayer resources.
- x **Communication:** Place high importance on the value of open and transparent communication with all FCS stakeholders.
- x **Ethics:** Perform the duties and tasks required to fulfill the purchasing mission with the highest standard of ethics and morals.
- x **Innovative:** Proactively seek ways to improve and enhance performance in all aspects of the purchasing function while maximizing the value of each dollar spent.



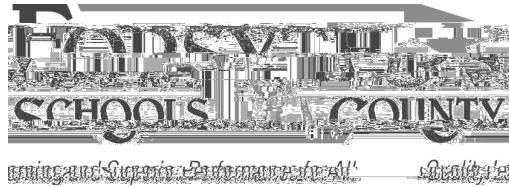


Request for Quote- The request for quote should be utilized for purchases between 10,000 and 49,999.

- x Purchaser develops written specifications for goods or services required
- x Solicitation is submitted in writing to obtain a minimum of three written responses
- x No requirements for public posting via web or news
- x Responses are sent to known vendors with no guarantee, therefore vendors are encouraged to periodically check the purchasing webpage for public notice when applicable
- x The RFQ is typically “on the street” for 3-5 business days
- x



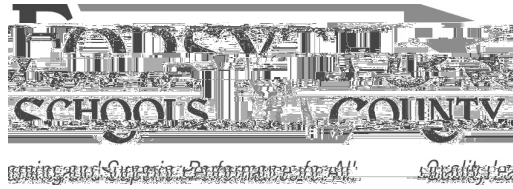
criteria for award, and/or FCS desires to evaluate key “non-cost” components in order to determine the



- x Be available to answer any clarification questions during the evaluation phase. Designate someone if you are going to be out of reach. Respond promptly to requests from the evaluation committee.

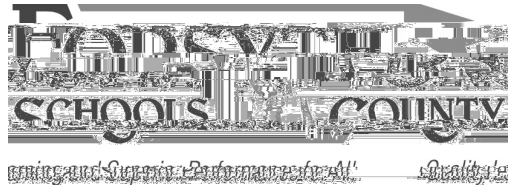
Frequently Asked Questions

- Q:** Am I an “Approved Vendor” after submitting a vendor application?
- A:** No, FCS only recognizes the term “approved vendor” for those companies who have been awarded contracts through the competitive solicitation process.
- Q:** What then is my status after submission of application and when can schools buy from me?
- A:** All new applications are entered with a status of “inactive”. This means that you are in the system and to be “activated” must either win a contract or have an FCS end-user department request to purchase from your organization. FCS departments can request activation of vendors as long as they comply with stated competition thresholds and the product/service is not currently available on an existing contract.
- Q:** I have a company resume that I like to send out, why do I need to fill out your vendor application and submit a W-9?
- A:** The information requested on the Vendor Application is required to be considered as a vendor for FCS. It is also required to submit it in the format requested. The W-9 is required by our Finance department to ensure compliance with relevant tax code. Please note that insufficient information or lack of a W-9 will put a hold on your application.
- Q:** Will my response still be received if my Bid/R response is late due to a missed or late



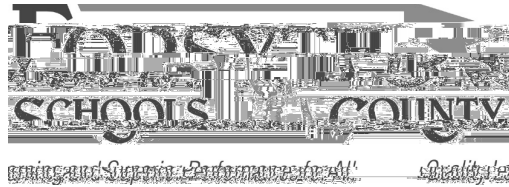
Q: What if I want to see more than just the award letter or tab sheet of a particular Bid or RFP?

A: All bidding information is available for you to view in our offices. Please call to schedule an



Glossary of Terms and Concepts

As is common with most industries, public procurement is filled with terms and concepts that are specific to the purchase of goods and services with public funds. This section defines some of the most common public purchasing terms in an effort to help you understand how we function and how public procurement functions in general. Most of the definitions provided are referenced to the National Institute of Governmental Pusut



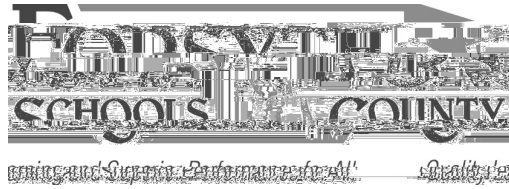
Evaluation Criteria- factors specified in an RFP that will be considered in determining to whom a contract will be awarded

Formal Bid- a bid which must be submitted in a sealed envelope and in conformance with a prescribed format to be opened in public at a specified time

Informal Bid (Quote)- a competitive quotation for supplies or services that is conveyed by phone, fax, or email that does not require sealed bidding or a public opening.

Multiple Award- the award of a contract to two or more vendors to furnish the same or similar supplies or services

Multi-year contracts- procurement contracts extending more than one year (The State of Georgia does not allow multi-year contract without compliance with OCGA 20-



Scope of Work- detailed description of the work which the purchasing jurisdiction wants the contractor to perform

Tabulation of Bids- the recording of bids and bidding data submitted in response to a solicitation for purposes of comparison, analysis, and record keeping

Terms and Conditions- all language in a contract including applicable standard clauses and special provisions; the rules under which all bids/RFPs must be submitted