



Date Approved: 03/11

Projected Review Date: 03/14

Policy Statement

It is the policy of the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board to support a central Purchasing Department as a means of obtaining maximum value for each dollar spent consistent with the educational goals of the Board and fair business principles.

The Board will, where possible, establish standards for goods and services to ensure an acceptable level of quality for the system and to promote efficiencies with respect to cost and service. The Board will maintain a competitive atmosphere between suppliers, ensuring that each is treated fairly and ensure appropriate budget controls and finance procedures for audit purposes.

Responsibility: Superintendent of Business and Treasurer

1. Guiding Principles:

Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest exists where the decisions made and/or actions taken by the employee in the exercise of the employee's duties could be affected by the employee's personal, financial or business interests; or the personal, financial or business interests of relatives, friends or associates of the employee.

An employee who has a connection to or relationship with an external organization or business (including a supplier or promoter of products or services to the Board) must avoid any situation in which that connection or relationship may influence or reasonably be perceived to influence the employee in performance of his or her duties. It is important to avoid not only real conflicts of interests but also being placed in a position that could give the appearance of being harmful to the Board's interest.

The Board will be guided by Section 217 of the Education Act regarding the promotion or sale of books, etc. by Board or Ministry employees to the Board. Other Board staff is guided by the conflict of interest guidelines in the Education Act and other statutory acts and regulations.

Employees of the Board occupy positions of great public trust and they are expected to conduct themselves with personal integrity, ethics, honesty and diligence in the performance of their duties. Employees having purchasing authority must maintain an unimpeachable standard of integrity in all business relationships.

Ethical Practices

School Board employees will not accept any gratuities, favours, direct or indirect payment that exceeds the bounds of normal social courtesies.

2. Objectives

The objectives of the Purchasing Department of the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board include:

- To procure by purchase or rental the required quality and quantity of goods and services in an efficient, safety and cost effective manner.
- To encourage open competitive bidding on all acquisition and disposal of goods and services where practical.
- To consider all costs, including acquisition, operating and disposal costs, in evaluating bid submissions from responsive and responsible vendors, rather than basing a decision solely on the lowest bid price.
- To operate a centralized purchasing program for the purchase of goods and services through the Purchasing Department of the Business Services Department.

3. A statement of intended outcome

The intended outcome of the Procurement Policy include:

- Obtain maximum value for each dollar spent consistent with the educational goals of the Board and fair business principles.
- Establish standards for goods and services to ensure an acceptable level of quality for the system and to promote efficiencies with respect to cost and service. From a procurement perspective, services in this context can include operational (snow removal, school cafeteria, waste management, courier, etc.) and professional (architectural, legal, etc.).
- The Board will maintain a competitive atmosphere between suppliers, ensuring that each is treated fairly and ensure appropriate budget controls and finance procedure for audit purposes.

4. Action Required

4.1 Board Approval

Board approval must be obtained prior to issuance of a contract to construct new school facilities.

4.2 Communications

It is the responsibility of the principal of a school, or head of the administrative department concerned, to ensure staff is properly informed with respect to current policy and procedures and the need for adherence to Board policy in order to acquire goods and services. The fact that a member of staff was not aware of proper policies and procedures is not considered an appropriate explanation for not adhering to Board policy and procedures.

4.3 Competition

While considering the advantages to the employer of maintaining a continuing relationship with a supplier, any arrangements which might, in the long term, prevent the effective operation of fair competition, should be avoided.

4.4 Confidentiality

The confidentiality of information received in the course of business must be respected and must not be used for personal gain; information provided must be true and fair and not designed to mislead. It is considered unethical and damaging to the Board's reputation to allow one supplier's information to pass to another supplier.

4.5 Contracts

Any contract signed by a Board employee, who is not authorized to enter into a contract, will be considered an obligation of the person signing the contract and not an obligation of the Board.

4.6 Designated Suppliers

All schools and departments will purchase identified goods and services only from designated suppliers with whom the Board has entered into contracts/agreements resulting from a tender process, with exemptions only as permitted under the "Exemptions" section of the Procurement Policy and Procedures.

4.7 Documentation

All acquisition processes shall be documented by the Purchasing Department, and kept on file in the Purchasing Department.

4.8 Environmentally Appropriate

The Purchasing Department, when practically and financially feasible, will consider acquisition of goods and services that will reduce the environmental footprint of the Board.

4.9 Exemptions

No good or service is exempt from the acquisition processes detailed in the Procurement Policy and Policy Directive.

4.10 Partnerships

Refer to Partnership Policy 4.04.

4.11 Prohibitions Regarding Purchasing

No contract or purchase shall be divided to avoid the requirement of the policy and related procedures.

No employee or elected official shall purchase or offer to purchase, on behalf of the Board, any goods or services, except in accordance with these procedures.

No personal purchases shall be made by the Board for elected members, or any appointed member of the Board, or for any Board employees.

No member of the Board of Trustees and no officer or employee of the Board, shall become interested, directly or indirectly as a contracting party, or partner, in work, the supplies or business in connection with a contract, or in any portion thereof, or of any supplies to be used therein, or in any monies to be derived there from.

4.12 Purchasing Card

In support of sound business practices, a procurement card will be issued to authorized Board employees for the acquisition of low volume, non-tendered products/services. Refer to Administrative Memo #B-3.

4.13 Purchasing Responsibilities

It is the responsibility and authority of the Superintendent of Business and Treasurer to administer the Procurement Policy and Procedure, in conjunction with the Manager, Purchasing Services who is responsible for procuring supply and equipment requirements of the Board, in accordance with the Procurement Policy and Procedure.

4.14 Signing Authority

The Manager, Purchasing Services may delegate authority to commit the Board to a purchase order, contract or agreement related to obtaining goods or services.

4.15 Standardization

The Board shall, where possible, establish standards for goods and services to ensure an acceptable level of quality for the system and to promote efficiencies with respect to cost and service.

4.16 Unauthorized Purchases

Purchases made in the name of the Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board without using a Board-authorized process are considered an obligation of the person making the purchase and not an obligation of the Board. Such processes are unauthorized and are subject to suspension of purchasing privileges.

5. Key Measures of Success

Successful procurement process will ensure timely, cost effective, transparent acquisition of goods and services that aligns with the educational goals of the Board and fair business principles.

6. Reference to Any Related Policies

- Partnership Policy 4.04
- Purchasing Card Administrative Memo #B-3
- School Generated Funds Administrative Memo #B-2
- Environmental Policy
- Nutrition Policy