

Procurement Services Request for Proposal (RFP)

Internal Audit Report

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BACKGROUND:

A Request for Proposal (RFP) is used when purchasing commodities or services that cannot be precisely defined. This occurs when district staff cannot clearly outline the scope of work required for the commodity, group of commodities, or contractual service. In such cases, district staff ask responsible vendors to propose solutions that meet the specifications outlined in the solicitation document. An RFP is issued when various solutions are desired, and cost is not the primary factor in the award. This process is also known as a solicitation for competitive sealed proposals.

Awards can be made to one or more proposers based on the selection criteria published in the solicitation document. All responses to an RFP must be responsive and responsible according to the requirements identified in the solicitation document. The scope of work, requirements, and evaluation criteria are listed in the RFP and assessed by an evaluation committee. Procurement Services, along with the requisitioning school or department, develops the specifications and evaluation criteria, ensuring compliance with Federal, State, and School Board rules and regulations.

The RFP document is posted on a solicitation portal called VendorLink, the district's online bid notification system, and notices are sent to registered firms. Firms download the RFP, complete the required paperwork, and submit their responses electronically by a specified deadline. After receiving the responses, Procurement Services distributes them to the evaluation committee for independent review and scoring. The committee ranks the firms and may invite shortlisted firms for presentations or interviews. Once the top-ranked firms are determined, a notice of the intended decision is posted on VendorLink, allowing for protests. After the protest period, contract negotiations occur, and the award recommendation is submitted to the School Board.

A Request for Proposal (RFP) is used when purchasing commodities or services that cannot be precisely defined.

Cost is not the primary factor in the RFP award.

District uses solicitation portal VendorLink online bid notification system.

Independent evaluation committee ranks the firms.

Award recommendation is submitted to the School Board after certain protest period.

Non-construction RFPs are managed by the *Procurement and Contracting* sub-department, while facilities construction RFPs are managed by the *Procurement Services and the Facilities Construction Contract* sub-department.

From July 1, 2023, to February 28, 2025, 21 RFPs were posted, with 15 being awarded by the School Board. Of the remaining six RFPs, three were rejected, one is currently active, one was canceled, and one is pending approval.

Among the 15 awarded RFPs, three were posted before July 1, 2023, but were reopened in year 2024 or 2025 and approved by the School Board for additional spending authorization or contract updates.

OBJECTIVE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY:

Objective

The objective of this audit was to evaluate the effectiveness, efficiency and internal controls of the RFP processes.

Scope

The audit scope included reviewing RFP procedures, activities, and awarded RFPs by the School Board from July 1, 2023, to February 28, 2025.

Methodology

We conducted this audit in accordance with *The International Professional Practices Framework (IPPF)* of Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) which includes the *Global Internal Audit Standards (Standards)*. We performed procedures as deemed necessary to provide reasonable assurance regarding the audit objective. Internal Auditing is an independent, risk-based, and objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve an organization's operations. It strengthens an organization's ability to create, protect, and sustain value by providing the board and management assurance, advice, insight, and foresight.

From July 1, 2023, to February 28, 2025, 21 RFPs were posted, with 15 being awarded by the School Board. Among the 15, three were approved for additional spending or contract updates.

The audit scope includes reviewing RFP procedures, activities, and awarded RFPs by the School Board from July 1, 2023, to February 28, 2025.

We conducted this audit in accordance with the IPPF.

We are required to note any material deficiencies in accordance with Florida Statutes, School Board Policy and sound business practices. No material deficiencies were noted in this audit. We also offer suggestions to improve controls or operational efficiency and effectiveness.

Details of our audit methodology included:

- Request and obtain direct access of Procurement network server folders, Procurement active contracts Smartsheet, and solicitation portal VendorLink;
- Discussion with Procurement staff;
- Review:
 - Procurement department intranet
 - Procurement Services Procedures Manual
 - Supporting documents of 15 RFPs via Procurement network server folder, Procurement Smartsheet, and VendorLink
 - Rejected, canceled, and pending approval RFPs
 - Vendor Performance Report
 - Signed contracts for awarded 15 RFPs;
 - List of staff access to VendorLink; and,
- Recalculate and confirm RFP savings for the selected 37 invoices.

RESULTS & RECOMMENDATIONS:

Overall Conclusion: Our overall conclusion is that the RFP process is functioning effectively, efficiently, and with appropriate internal controls.

No recommendations were made as a result of this audit.

We wish to thank the Procurement Services Department for their cooperation and assistance with this audit.

No material deficiencies were noted in this audit.

We requested and obtained direct access of Procurement network server folder, Procurement active contracts in Smartsheet, and solicitation portal VendorLink to review supporting documents for awarded RFPs

Our overall conclusion is that the RFP process is functioning effectively, efficiently, and with appropriate internal controls.

No recommendations were made as a result of this audit.