

BOARD AUTHORITY	<p>A board may adopt rules and procedures for the acquisition of goods and services. <i>Education Code 44.031(d)</i></p>
DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY	<p>A board may delegate its authority regarding an action authorized or required to be taken by a district by Education Code Chapter 44, Subchapter B, to a designated person, representative, or committee.</p> <p>A board may not delegate the authority to act regarding an action authorized or required to be taken by the board by Education Code Chapter 44, Subchapter B.</p> <p><i>Education Code 44.0312</i></p>
INJUNCTION	<p>A court may enjoin performance of a contract made in violation of Education Code Chapter 44, Subchapter B. A county attorney, district attorney, criminal district attorney, citizen of the county in which a district is located, or any interested party may bring an action for an injunction. A party who prevails in an action brought under this subsection is entitled to reasonable attorney's fees as approved by the court. <i>Education Code 44.032(f)</i></p>
PURCHASES VALUED AT OR ABOVE \$25,000	<p>All district contracts, except contracts for the purchase of produce or vehicle fuel, valued at \$25,000 or more in the aggregate for each 12-month period, shall be made by the method that provides the best value for a district:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Competitive bidding.</li> <li>2. Competitive sealed proposals.</li> <li>3. A request for proposals for services other than construction services.</li> <li>4. An interlocal contract.</li> <li>5. The reverse auction procedure as defined by Government Code 2155.062(d).</li> <li>6. The formation of a political subdivision corporation under Local Government Code 304.001.</li> </ol> <p><i>Education Code 44.031(a)</i></p> <hr/> <p><b>Note:</b> Regarding construction of school facilities, see CV generally; CVA for competitive bidding; CVB for competitive sealed proposals; CVC for design/build contracts; CVD, CVE for contracts using a construction manager; and CVF for job order contracts for minor repairs/alterations.</p> <hr/>
FACTORS	<p>In awarding a contract, a district shall consider:</p>

1. Purchase price.
2. The reputation of the vendor and of the vendor's goods and services.
3. The quality of the vendor's goods or services.
4. The extent to which the goods or services meet the district's needs.
5. The vendor's past relationship with the district.
6. The impact on the ability of the district to comply with laws relating to historically underutilized businesses.
7. The total long-term cost to the district to acquire the goods or services.
8. Any other relevant factor specifically listed in the request for bids or proposals.

*Education Code 44.031(b)*

In awarding a contract by competitive sealed bid under Education Code 44.031(b), a district that has its central administrative office located in a municipality with a population of less than 250,000 may consider a bidder's principal place of business in the manner provided by Local Government Code 271.9051. This section does not apply to the purchase of telecommunications services or information services, as those terms are defined by 47 U.S.C. Section 153. *Education Code 44.031(b-1)*

The factors listed above are the only criteria that may be considered by a district in its decision to award a contract. A district may apply one, some, or all of the criteria, but it may not completely ignore them. *R.G.V. Vending v. Weslaco Indep. Sch. Dist.*, 995 S.W.2d 897 (Tex. App.—Corpus Christi 1999, no pet.).

CONTRACT WITH  
PERSON INDEBTED  
TO DISTRICT

A board may, by resolution, establish regulations permitting a school district to refuse to enter into a contract or other transaction with a person indebted to the school district. A district may refuse to award a contract to or enter into a transaction with an apparent low bidder or successful proposer that is indebted to the district.

The term "person" includes an individual, sole proprietorship, corporation, nonprofit corporation, partnership, joint venture, limited liability company, and any other entity that seeks to enter into a contract or other transaction with a district requiring board approval.

*Education Code 44.044*

NOTICE PUBLICATION	Notice of when and where bids or proposals or the responses to a request for qualifications will be received and opened shall be published in the county where a district's central administrative office is located, once a week for at least two weeks prior to the deadline for receiving bids, proposals, or responses to a request for qualifications. If there is no newspaper in that county, the advertising shall be published in a newspaper in the county nearest the county seat of the county in which a district's central administrative office is located. In a two-step procurement process, the time and place where the second-step bids, proposals, or responses will be received are not required to be published separately. <i>Education Code 44.031(g)</i>
PERSONAL PROPERTY PURCHASES VALUED \$10,000 TO \$25,000	When a district seeks to purchase personal property of a value of at least \$10,000 but less than \$25,000, in the aggregate, for a 12-month period, the district may either purchase those items in accordance with Education Code 44.031(a) and (b) described above or follow the vendor list procedures described below. <i>Education Code 44.033(a)</i>
NOTICE	For each 12-month period, a district shall publish a notice in two successive issues of any newspaper of general circulation in the county in which the school is located. If there is no newspaper in the county in which the school is located, the advertising shall be published in a newspaper in the county nearest the county seat of the county in which the school is located, specifying the categories of personal property to be purchased and soliciting the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of vendors that are interested in supplying any of the categories to a district. <i>Education Code 44.033(b)</i>
VENDOR LIST	For each category, a district shall create a vendor list consisting of each vendor that responds to the published notice and any additional vendors the district elects to include. Before a district makes a purchase from a category of personal property, it must obtain written or telephone price quotations from at least three vendors from the list for that category. If fewer than three vendors are on the list, a district shall contact each vendor. Whenever possible, telephone quotes should be confirmed in writing by mail or facsimile. The bidding records shall be retained with a district's competitive bid records and are subject to audit. Purchases shall be made from the lowest responsible bidder, except as provided by Education Code 44.033(f). <i>Education Code 44.033(b), (c)</i>
LOCATION OF BIDDER	In awarding a contract by competitive sealed bid under Education Code 44.031(b) and (c), a district that has its central administrative office located in a municipality with a population of less than 250,000 may consider a bidder's principal place of business in the

manner provided by Local Government Code 271.9051. This section does not apply to the purchase of telecommunications services or information services, as those terms are defined by 47 U.S.C. Section 153. *Education Code 44.033(f)*

PRODUCE OR FUEL  
PURCHASES

When a district purchases produce or fuel valued at \$10,000 or more in the aggregate, for a 12-month period, the district must either purchase those items in accordance with Education Code 44.031(a) and (b) described above or follow the vendor list procedures described immediately above. *Education Code 44.033(a), (d)*

PROFESSIONAL  
SERVICES

The purchasing requirements of Education Code 44.031 do not apply to a contract for professional services rendered, including the services of an architect, attorney, or fiscal agent.

A district may contract for professional services rendered by a financial consultant or a technology consultant in the manner provided by Government Code 2254.003, in lieu of the methods provided by Education Code 44.031.

*Education Code 44.031(f)*

Competitive bids shall not be solicited for professional services of any licensed or registered certified public accountant, architect, landscape architect, land surveyor, physician, optometrist, professional engineer, state-certified or state-licensed real estate appraiser, or registered nurse. Contracts for these professional services shall be made on the basis of demonstrated competence and qualifications to perform the services and for a fair and reasonable price. *Gov't Code 2254.002, 2254.003(a)*

An interlocal contract between a district and a purchasing cooperative may not be used to purchase engineering or architectural services. *Gov't Code 791.011(h)*

[See also CV]

EMERGENCY DAMAGE  
OR DESTRUCTION

If school equipment, a school facility, or a part of a school facility or personal property is destroyed or severely damaged or, as a result of an unforeseen catastrophe or emergency, undergoes major operational or structural failure, and a board determines that the delay posed by the methods provided for in Education Code 44.031 would prevent or substantially impair the conduct of classes or other essential school activities, then contracts for the replacement or repair of the equipment, school facility, or the part of the school facility may be made by methods other than those required by Education Code 44.031. *Education Code 44.031(h)*

COMPUTERS

A district may acquire computers and computer-related equipment, including computer software, through the Department of Informa-

tion Resources (DIR) under contracts with the DIR in accordance with Government Code Chapter 2054 or 2157. *Education Code 44.031(i)*

AUTOMATED  
INFORMATION  
SYSTEM

A district may purchase an automated information system using the purchasing method described by Government Code 2157.068 for commodity items or a purchasing method designated by the comptroller to obtain the best value for the state, including a request for offers method. A district that purchases an item using a method listed above satisfies any state law requiring the district to seek competitive bids for the purchase of the item. *Gov't Code 2157.006*

AUTOMATED  
EXTERNAL  
DEFIBRILLATORS

A school that purchases or leases an automated external defibrillator, as defined by Health and Safety Code 779.001, shall ensure that the defibrillator meets standards established by the federal Food and Drug Administration. *Education Code 44.047*

SOLE SOURCE

Compliance with Education Code 44.031 is not required for purchases that are available from only one source, including:

1. An item for which competition is precluded because of a patent, copyright, secret process, or monopoly.
2. A film, manuscript, or book.
3. A utility service, including electricity, gas, or water.
4. A captive replacement part or component for equipment.

The sole source exception shall not apply to mainframe data processing equipment and peripheral attachments with a single-item purchase price in excess of \$15,000.

*Education Code 44.031(j), (k)*

IMPERMISSIBLE  
PRACTICES

A trustee, employee, or agent shall not, with criminal negligence, make or authorize separate, sequential, or component purchases to avoid the purchasing requirements set out in Education Code 44.031. An officer or employee shall not knowingly violate Education Code 44.031 in any other manner.

“Component purchases” means purchases of the component parts of an item that in normal purchasing practices would be made in one purchase. “Separate purchases” means purchases, made separately, of items that in normal purchasing practices would be made in one purchase. “Sequential purchases” means purchases, over a period, of items that in normal purchasing practices would be made in one purchase.

Violation of this provision is a Class B misdemeanor and an offense involving moral turpitude, conviction of which shall result in removal from office or dismissal from employment. A trustee who is convicted of a violation of this provision is considered to have committed official misconduct and for four years after the date of final conviction, the removed person is ineligible to be appointed or elected to public office in Texas, is ineligible to be employed by or act as an agent for the state or a political subdivision, and is ineligible to receive any compensation through a contract with the state or a political subdivision. [See BBC]

*Education Code 44.032*

## INSURANCE

A contract for the purchase of insurance is a contract for the purchase of personal property and shall be made in accordance with Education Code 44.031 or 44.033. *Education Code 44.031, 44.033; Atty. Gen. Op. DM-347 (1995)*

MULTIYEAR  
CONTRACTS

A district may execute an insurance contract for a period longer than 12 months, if the contract contains either or both of the provisions described at COMMITMENT OF CURRENT REVENUE, below. If a district executes a multiyear insurance contract, it need not advertise for insurance vendors until the 12-month period during which the district will be executing a new insurance contract. *Atty. Gen. Op. DM-418 (1996)*

COMPETITIVE  
BIDDING

If a district receives two or more bids from responsible bidders that are identical, in nature and amount, as the lowest and best bids, it shall select only one bidder from the identical bids.

If only one of the bidders submitting identical bids is a resident of a district, that bidder shall be selected. If two or more such bidders are residents of a district, one shall be selected by the casting of lots. In all other cases, one of the identical bids shall be selected by the casting of lots.

A board shall prescribe the manner of casting lots and shall be present when the lots are cast. All qualified bidders or their representatives may be present at the casting of lots.

*Local Gov't Code 271.901*

## REVERSE AUCTION

A district that uses the reverse auction procedure must include in the procedure a notice provision and other provisions necessary to produce a method of purchasing that is advantageous to the district and fair to vendors. *Local Gov't Code 271.906(b)*

Reverse auction procedure means:

1. A real-time bidding process usually lasting less than one hour and taking place at a previously scheduled time and Internet location, in which multiple suppliers, anonymous to each other, submit bids to provide the designated goods or services; or
2. A bidding process usually lasting less than two weeks and taking place during a previously scheduled period and at a previously scheduled Internet location, in which multiple suppliers, anonymous to each other, submit bids to provide the designated goods or services.

*Gov't Code 2155.062(d)*

OUT-OF-STATE  
BIDDERS

A board shall not award a contract for general construction, improvements, services, or public works projects or for purchase of supplies, materials, or equipment to a bidder whose principal place of business is not in this state, unless the nonresident underbids the lowest bid submitted by a responsible resident bidder by an amount that is not less than the amount by which a resident bidder would be required to underbid a nonresident bidder to obtain a comparable contract in the state in which the nonresident's principal place of business is located. *Gov't Code 2252.001, 2252.002*

This requirement shall not apply to a contract involving federal funds. A district shall rely on information published by the comptroller in evaluating the bids of a nonresident bidder. *Gov't Code 2252.003, 2252.004*

INTERLOCAL  
AGREEMENTS

To increase efficiency and effectiveness, a district may contract or agree with other local governments and with state agencies, including the comptroller, to perform some of its purchasing functions. *Gov't Code 791.001, 791.011, 791.025*

An interlocal contract must be authorized by a board and the governing body of each contracting party; must state the purpose, terms, rights, and duties of the contracting parties; and must specify that each party paying for the performance of governmental functions or services shall make those payments from current revenues available to the paying party.

An interlocal contractual payment must be in an amount that fairly compensates the performing party for the services or functions performed under the contract. The contract may be renewed annually.

*Gov't Code 791.011(d)-(f)*

A district may agree with another local government, including a nonprofit corporation that is created and operated to provide one or more governmental functions and services, or with the state or a

state agency, including the comptroller, to purchase goods and services reasonably required for the installation, operation, or maintenance of the goods. Such an agreement may not, however, apply to services provided by firefighters, police officers, or emergency medical personnel.

A district that purchases goods and services by agreement with another local government or with the state or state agency satisfies the requirement to seek competitive bids for the purchase of goods and services.

*Gov't Code 791.025(b), (c); Atty. Gen. Op. JC-37 (1999)*

STATE PURCHASING  
PROGRAM

Purchasing services performed for a district by the comptroller shall include:

1. The extension of state contract prices to a district when the comptroller considers it feasible.
2. Solicitation of bids on items desired by a district if the solicitation is considered feasible by the comptroller and is desired by the district.
3. Provision of information and technical assistance to a district about the purchasing program.

The comptroller may charge a district its actual costs in providing purchasing services.

*Local Gov't Code 271.082*

DISTRICT  
REQUIREMENTS

A district may participate in the purchasing program, including participation in purchases that use the reverse auction procedure, by filing with the BPC a resolution adopted by the board requesting that the district be allowed to participate on a voluntary basis, to the extent the BPC deems feasible, and stating that the board shall:

1. Designate an official to act for the district in all matters relating to the program, including the purchase of items from the vendor under any contract.
2. Direct the decisions of its representative.
3. Be responsible for:
  - a. Submitting requisitions to the commission under contract(s) and for payment directly to the vendor; and
  - b. Electronically sending purchase orders directly to vendors, or complying with procedures governing a reverse auction purchase, and electronically sending the BPC reports on actual purchases.



4. Be responsible for the vendor's compliance with all conditions of delivery and quality of the purchased item.

A purchase made through participation in this program meets any state requirement to seek competitive bids for the purchase of the item.

ELECTRONIC  
MARKETPLACE

If a district has the ability to electronically send purchase orders and information, it may participate in the Department of Information Resources' electronic procurement system, as described in Government Code Chapter 2177.

*Local Gov't Code 271.083*

MULTIPLE AWARD  
CONTRACT  
SCHEDULE

The BPC shall develop a schedule of multiple award contracts that have been previously awarded using a competitive process by the federal government or any other governmental entity in any state.

A district may purchase goods or services directly from a vendor under a contract listed on a schedule. An authorized purchase satisfies any requirement of state law relating to competitive bids or proposals and satisfies any applicable requirements of Government Code 2157.

The price listed for a good or service under a multiple award contract is a maximum price. A district may negotiate a lower price for goods or services under a contract listed on a schedule.

*Gov't Code 2155, Subchapter I*

COOPERATIVE  
PURCHASING  
PROGRAM

A district may participate in a cooperative purchasing program with another local government or a local cooperative organization. If a district does so, it may sign an agreement with another participating local government or a local cooperative stating that the district will:

1. Designate a person to act on behalf of the district in all matters relating to the program.
2. Make payments to another participating local government or local cooperative organization or directly under a contract, as provided in the agreement.
3. Be responsible for the vendor's compliance.

If a district participates in a cooperative purchasing program, it satisfies any law requiring it to seek competitive bids.

*Local Gov't Code 271.102; Atty. Gen. Op. JC-37 (1999)*

MANAGEMENT FEE  
REPORT

A school district that enters into a purchasing contract valued at \$25,000 or more under Education Code 44.031(a)(5) (interlocal

contract), under Subchapter F, Chapter 271, Local Government Code (cooperative purchasing program), or under any other cooperative purchasing program authorized for school districts by law shall document any contract-related fee, including any management fee, and the purpose of each fee under the contract.

The amount, purpose, and disposition of any fee described above must be presented in a written report and submitted annually in an open meeting of the board. The written report must appear as an agenda item. The Commissioner of Education may audit the written report.

*Education Code 44.0331*

STATE COUNCIL ON  
COMPETITIVE  
GOVERNMENT

As approved by the State Council on Competitive Government, a district may voluntarily participate in a contract awarded by the council or a state agency under Government Code 2162. A district that purchases goods or services under this type of contract is considered to have satisfied any state law requiring competitive purchasing. *Gov't Code 2162.102(d)*

COMMITMENT OF  
CURRENT REVENUE

A contract for the acquisition, including lease, of real or personal property is a commitment of a district's current revenue only, provided the contract contains either or both of the following provisions:

1. Retains to the board the continuing right to terminate the contract at the expiration of each budget period during the term of the contract.
2. Is conditioned on a best efforts attempt by the board to obtain and appropriate funds for payment of the contract.

*Local Gov't Code 271.903*

ENERGY OR WATER  
CONSERVATION  
MEASURES

A district may contract for energy or water conservation measures. Such a contract shall be let according to the procedures established for professional services by Government Code 2254.004.

A board shall establish a goal to reduce a district's annual electric consumption by five percent each year for six years, beginning September 1, 2007.

*Education Code 44.901* [See policy CL for legal requirements pertaining to such contracts]

RECYCLED  
PRODUCTS

A district shall give preference in purchasing to products made of recycled materials if the products meet applicable specifications as to quantity and quality. A district shall regularly review and revise its purchasing procedures and specifications for purchase of goods, supplies, equipment, and materials in order to:

1. Eliminate procedures and specifications that explicitly discriminate against products made of recycled materials.
2. Encourage the use of products made of recycled materials.
3. Ensure to the maximum extent economically feasible that the district purchase products that may be recycled when they have served their intended use.

A district may seek an exemption from compliance if it has a population of less than 5,000 within its geographic boundaries and demonstrates to the Water Commission that compliance would work a hardship on the district.

*Health and Safety Code 361.426*

#### AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS

If the cost and quality are equal, a district shall give preference in purchasing to agricultural products, including textiles and other similar products, that are produced, processed, or grown in Texas. "Processed" means canning, freezing, drying, juicing, preserving, or any other act that changes the form of a good from its natural state to another form. If Texas agricultural products are not equal in cost and quality to other agricultural products, a district shall give preference in purchasing to agricultural products produced, processed, or grown in the United States, if the cost and quality of the U.S. and foreign products are equal.

A district may not adopt product purchasing specifications that unnecessarily exclude agricultural products produced, processed, or grown in Texas.

#### VEGETATION FOR LANDSCAPING

If cost is equal and the quality is not inferior, a district shall give preference to Texas vegetation when it purchases vegetation for landscaping purposes.

*Education Code 44.042*

#### BUS PURCHASE OR LEASE

Each contract proposed for the purchase or lease of one or more school buses, including a lease with an option to purchase, shall be submitted to competitive bidding when the contract is valued at \$20,000 or more. *Education Code 44.031(l)* [See CNB]

#### CRIMINAL HISTORY

Before entering into a contract with a district, a person or business must give notice to the district if the person or an owner or operator of the business has been convicted of a felony. A district may terminate a contract with a person or business if the district determines that the person or business failed to give such notice or misrepresented the conduct resulting in the conviction. A district must compensate the person for services performed before the contract terminated. *Education Code 44.034*

EMPLOYED  
BEFORE JANUARY  
1, 2008

An entity that contracts with a school district to provide services shall obtain from any law enforcement or criminal justice agency or a private entity that is a consumer reporting agency governed by the Fair Credit Reporting Act (15 U.S.C. Section 1681 et seq.), all criminal history record information that relates to an employee of the entity who is employed before January 1, 2008, and who is not subject to a national criminal history record information review under Education Code 22.0834(b) [see DBAA] if:

1. The employee has continuing duties related to the contracted services; and
2. The employee has direct contact with students.

The entity shall certify to the school district that it received all of the criminal history record information required above.

A school district may obtain from any law enforcement or criminal justice agency all criminal history record information that relates to a person described above.

*Education Code 22.0834(g)-(i)*

EMPLOYMENT  
OFFERED ON OR  
AFTER JANUARY 1,  
2008

A person who, on or after January 1, 2008, is offered employment by an entity that contracts with a school district must submit to a national criminal history record information review if:

1. The employee or applicant has or will have continuing duties related to the contracted services; and
2. The employee or applicant has or will have direct contact with students.

The person must submit to the review before being employed or serving in a capacity described above.

An entity contracting with a school district shall obtain all criminal history record information that relates to a person described above through the criminal history clearinghouse as provided by Government Code 411.0845. The entity shall certify to the school district that the entity has received all criminal history record information relating to the person.

A school district may obtain the criminal history record information of a person to whom this section applies through the criminal history clearinghouse as provided by Government Code 411.0845.

*Education Code 22.0834(a)-(e)*

EMERGENCY

In the event of an emergency, a school district may allow a person to whom Education Code 22.0834(a) or (g) applies to enter school district property if the person is accompanied by a district em-

ployee. A school district may adopt rules regarding an emergency situation. *Education Code 22.0834(f)*

RIGHT TO WORK

While engaged in procuring goods and services or awarding a contract, a district:

1. May not consider whether a vendor is a member of or has another relationship with any organization; and
2. Shall ensure that its bid specifications and any subsequent contract or other agreement do not deny or diminish the right of a person to work because of the person's membership or other relationship status with respect to any organization.

*Education Code 44.043*

LOBBYING  
RESTRICTION:  
TOBACCO EDUCATION  
GRANT FUNDS

A district may not spend grant funds it receives from the Permanent Fund for Tobacco Education and Enforcement to pay:

1. Lobbying expenses incurred by the district;
2. A person or entity that is required under Government Code Chapter 305 to register as a lobbyist with the Texas Ethics Commission.
3. Any partner, employee, employer, relative, contractor, consultant, or related entity of a person or entity of a registered lobbyist (as described in item 2);
4. A person or entity who has been hired to represent associations or other entities for the purpose of affecting the outcome of legislation, agency rules, ordinances, or other government policies.

*Gov't Code 403.1067*