

**“Educational and Administrative Supplies *Must Be Purchased from Approved Needham Public Schools Bid Vendors*<sup>1</sup>. Procure all Other Supplies and Services Using the Following Uniform Procurement Act (Ch 30B) Rules, Unless Specifically Exempt”**

**EXEMPT PURCHASES:**

The following purchases are exempt from Ch30B requirements:

- Purchases from State-wide contracts issued by O.S.D.
- Purchases from TEC bid and other collective purchasing agreements
- Purchase/ disposal of supplies from other Town departments, the state or federal government
- Advertising required notices
- SPED services & supplies (direct service only)
- Attorney, labor relations, CPA services
- Physician, dentist, health care worker, social worker, psychiatrist, veterinary services
- Purchases funded from gifts (donations), trusts and student activity funds
- Professional development for school employees
- Expenditures from federal funds, when Ch30B prevents compliance with federal laws and regulations

**BID SPLITTING, or subdividing your purchase to avoid bid laws, is ILLEGAL!**

Purchases of \$0 - \$9,999

- Best Business Practices to Select Vendor
- P.O. Approved by FinOps Before Goods/ Services Ordered
- No Advertising or Contract Required

Purchases of \$10,000-\$49,999

- Quotes Solicited/ Sole Source Requested (Using Procedures Below)
- Written Contract Required
- P.O. Approved by FinOps Before Goods/ Services Ordered

*Sole Source If Only One Vendor Exists*

If there is only one single distributor of the desired good/ service, request a Sole Source determination. (Sole Source Request Form.) A sole source may not be used if:

- Multiple vendors/distributors exist
- The purchase exceeds \$50,000, unless for proprietary educational materials, library books or software maintenance.

*Quotes if Multiple Vendors Exist*

If there are multiple distributors of the desired good/service, solicit 3 written Quotes. (Quote Form)

- When soliciting quotes, obtain the vendor’s name, address and contact, as well as the unit price and total price.
- You have complied with the law if you have *asked for* three quotes, even if you have not *obtained* them. Bidders may choose not to reply, or may not offer the desired good/service. (Non-responsive)

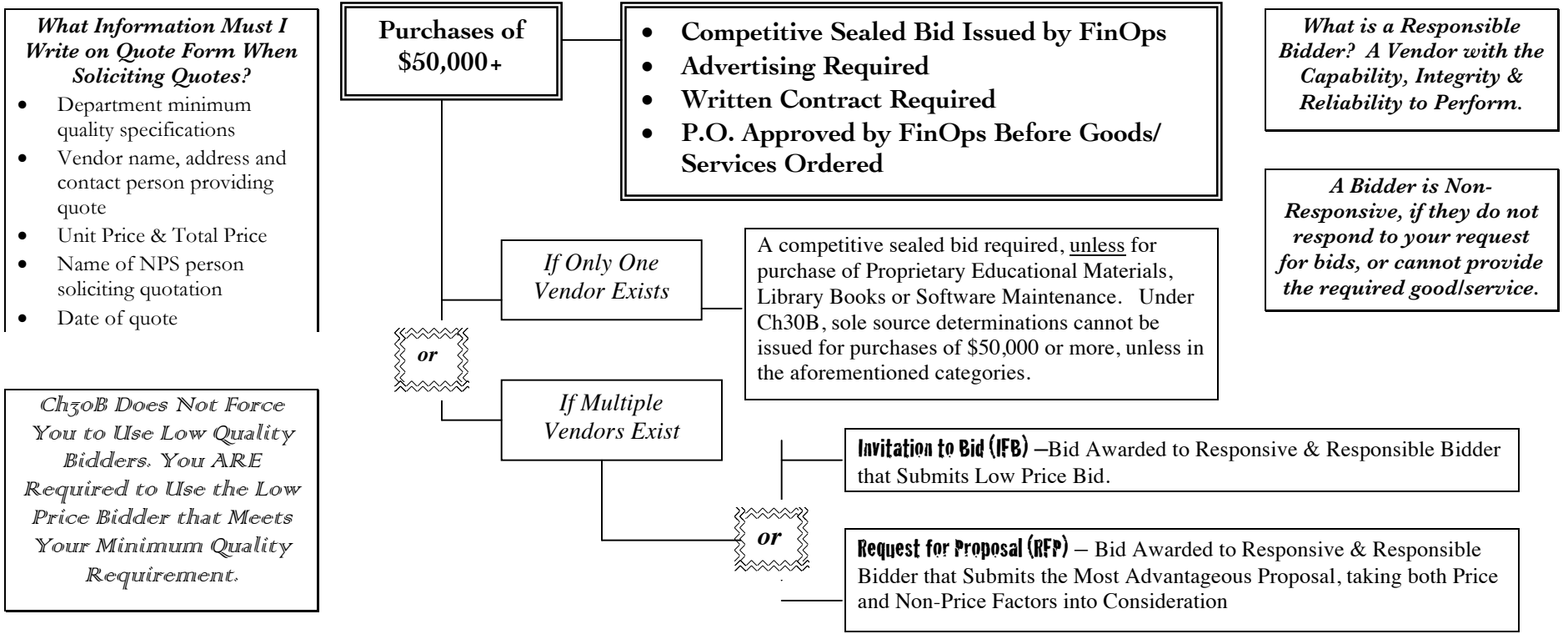
*or*

**RULES OF THUMB:**

The following Ch30B rules of thumb apply:

- Ch30B applies to purchases from local, state and federal funding sources (except donations, student activity funds, trusts & scholarships)
- Bidding requirements are based on the value to the vendor – not amount paid to/by NPS.
- Written contract is required for every purchase over \$10,000 – 3 year maximum.
- The Director of Financial Operations, as School Procurement Officer, reviews all purchases for compliance with Ch30B.
- Sole source determinations may be made only after a “reasonable investigation” reveals no competitors. FinOps will ask for internet documentation of your search.
- You may increase the quantity purchased by up to 25% of the total bid price, provided the unit cost remains the same. Increases over 25% require a new procurement and a new contract. FinOps must document in writing why the increase is more practical and economical than re-bidding.

<sup>1</sup>If a reasonable facsimile of the desired good or service is not available from NPS bid vendors, the department may conduct a separate procurement using the above rules.



**Frequently Asked Questions:**

- Why do I need to purchase all of my educational and office supplies from the Approved Bid Vendors?** The District purchases more than \$50,000 of these items each year, which triggers the Ch30B requirement for sealed bids. All of the Approved Bid Vendors have been selected using this process.
- Do I have to use an Approved Bid Vendor, even if I can obtain an item cheaper elsewhere?** Yes. Under the law, when purchases exceed \$50,000, the District may procure only from vendors selected through a competitive sealed bid process. Across all contracts, the District saves money this way.
- If I am purchasing less than \$10,000, why must I use an Approved Bid Vendor?** When District-wide purchases exceed \$50,000, the District must purchase from vendors selected through a competitive sealed bid process. Best business practices, quotes and sole source procurements are no longer an option.
- What If I can't find what I am looking for from an Approved Bid Vendor?** If you can't find a reasonable facsimile of the desired item, you may procure from another vendor, following the aforementioned steps. If a reasonable facsimile exists, however, you must purchase from an Approved Bid Vendor.
- Where is the list of Approved Bid Vendors?** A listing of Approved Bid Vendors is found online at: <http://rwd1.needham.k12.ma.us/finance/Purchasing>.
- How do I go about adding a vendor to the list of Approved Bid Vendors?** Contact the Business Office for further information.
- I am a teacher – is it my responsibility to obtain quotes, contracts and sole source requests?** No. The bookkeeper assigned to your department is responsible for obtaining the required procurement, assisted by department clerical staff, as directed by the Principal or Director.
- Are textbooks and curriculum materials considered educational supplies? When do I need to use the Approved Bid Vendors?** Yes, unless they are proprietary (available from a single source.)
- For what items must bid vendors be used for?** Educational and administrative supplies, including classroom materials, art supplies, athletic and physical education equipment and supplies, science supplies and equipment, student books, library books, textbooks (except when distributed by a single source), Think Math! Materials, educational technology, technology supplies, software, instructional equipment, furniture, office supplies, and medical and therapeutic supplies. In addition, there are bid vendors for pizza, food services and library service supplies and services, motor vehicles, and many other services.