

Summary Purchasing Survey for School Districts-Seven Respondents
Note that two respondents are from West Virginia,
two from North Carolina and three from South Carolina

Question 8- Are you a member of a professional purchasing society or association?

If so, which one?

- NIGP-2 respondents
- South Carolina AGO-1 respondent
- NASPO-1 respondent
- Does not belong to a professional purchasing society-3 respondents

Question 9-Number of students

- An average of 16,712 students per district

Question 10-Number of schools

- An average of 44.6 schools per district

Question 11-# of new schools in last 4 years

- An average of 2.1 new schools per district in the last four years

Question 12-Number of purchase orders in last four years for furniture products

- Responses ranged from 4 to 200

Question 13-\$ Total for last four years for furniture products

- Ranged from unknown to \$750,000

Question 14-What is your preference for wooden furniture relative to metal and plastic without looking at price?

- An average of 3.2 on a scale to five, so just slightly above being the same

Question 15-What is your preference for wooden furniture relative to metal and plastic when looking at price?

- An average of 3.0, so the same

Question 16-Of the following wood species for wooden school furniture, what is your preference for each species? (Please mark + or -)

- Oak-three positives, no negatives or no preferences
- Cherry-four positives, no negatives or no preferences
- Maple-five positives, no negatives or no preferences
- Yellow poplar-one positives, two negatives, four no preferences
- Pine-no positives, two no preferences, two negatives
- Birch-four positives, three no preferences, no negatives
- Beech-four positives, three no preferences, no negatives
- Sweet gum-no positives, five no preferences, two negatives

Question 17-What is your preference of painted furniture as compared to stained or clear finish wooden furniture?

- An average of 2.3 on a scale to five, so painted furniture is less preference

Question 18-What is your preference of domestic versus imported made wooden furniture?

- An average of 4.5 on a scale of five, so these responders are prefer domestic

Question 19-Where in school facilities do you think wooden furniture should be preferred versus metal and plastic furniture?

- Staff offices-four yes, one unknown and two no answers
- Classrooms-one yes, one unknown and five no answers
- Libraries and media rooms-four yes, one unknown and two no answers
- Dining halls-no yeses, one unknown and six no answers
- Arts and crafts-three yes, one unknown and three no answers
- Assembly rooms-no yes, one unknown and six no answers

Question 20-Would it be helpful for wooden furniture manufacturers to support their products with the following:

- Posters-one yes, one no opinion, five no answers
- Use local species-four yes, one no opinion, two no answers
- Use school logos and designs-three yes and one no opinion
- Identify wood species on products-two yes, one no opinion, four no answers
- Strips of alternating colors of wood on products-one no opinion, six no answers

Question 21-Do you have a preference for the following wooden furniture construction?

- Solid lumber-five positive, two no preference
- Melamine over particleboard-no positives, three no preference, four negative
- Wood veneer over particleboard-one positive, two no preference, four negative
- Wood veneer over veneer-two positive, three no preference, two negative
- Plastic laminate over particleboard-two positive, two no preference, three negative

Question 22-What can wooden furniture manufacturers provide that you would find helpful when purchasing furniture? These were the things listed:

- Provide informative support for products
- Have competitive pricing
- Offer detailed specifications and warranties

Question 23-What is your opinion of wood as compared to metal and plastic in terms of being “Green” and “Sustainable”?

- Average response was 3.8 on a five point scale mean overall an opinion that wood is more green and sustainable than metal and plastic

Question 24-Please describe the process of how you buy furniture for new facilities-

- The general response is that the department seeks input from the users and staff, does research, writes specifications and puts the bid out for vendors to bid

Question 25-Please describe the process of how you buy replacement furniture for existing facilities-

- The general response is that the department seeks input from the users and staff, does research, writes specifications and puts the bid out for vendors to bid

Question 26-Is there \$ limits or thresholds that adjust how you buy furniture? If so, what are the limits?

- Three responded with a \$ limit where purchasing methods changed, four reported having no \$ thresholds

Question 27-Do your department’s purchasing policies encourage or require consideration of or have preferences for specific groups or goals?

- Four did not respond, two listed diversity and sustainability, one listed lowest price for best quality

Question 28-Please describe state statutes, regulations and policies that significantly impact your procurement practices.

- Three responded with none, no answer or no significant regulations exist. Three responded with references to state procurement procedures and codes

Question 29-Who (what position) in your organization starts the process of buying furniture?

- One responded with need, two by end users and three reported members of the administration and staff

Question 30-Who on the school district’s staff are included in the process of buying furniture? (Please check all that apply).

- Users-five of six respondents
- Finance personnel-six respondents
- Upper level administration-five respondents
- Principals-six respondents
- Facility personnel-three from SC reported facility personnel were involved

Question 31-Do any outside professionals assist in the selection of furniture, if so, who are they?

- One no answer and two reported no outsiders
- Designers and architects-three responses
- Sales reps-one response
- Consultants-one response

Question 32-Does your purchasing department offer online information on bids, like Request-To-Bid?

- Yes-four of six responses
- No-two responses

Question 33-Please feel free to describe other institutional or system policies that significantly impact your procurement practices and ability to contain costs.

- One responded that things are impacted when too many individuals get involved
- One reported Federal Policy-EDGAR
- One responded with none
- Three no answers

Question 34-Over the last four years, how has the expenditures for furniture been split between furnishing new buildings and replacements?

- Two of seven were no answer
- One was unknown
- One was 50% new, 50% replacement
- Two were 90% new, 10% replacement
- One was 85% new, 15% replacement

Question 35-Does your purchasing department maintain a prospective bidders list for various types of goods and services that is different from the state approved bidders list?

- Yes for four responses
- One response included yes and no
- One no response
- One no answer

Question 36-If yes, then how is your prospective bidders list created?

- Three did not respond
- Three reported vendors ask
- Three reported using past vendors
- One reported using the Internet to add vendors to the list
- One reported using trade associations to find vendors

Question 37-Are you limited to the state approved bidders list unless for custom items?

- One no answer and six no's

Question 38-Does your unit have a manual for vendors that explain the policies and practices used to procure goods and services?

- Three yes, three no and one no answer

Question 39-Does your purchasing department maintain a purchasing calendar (a listing of upcoming purchasing events)?

- Two yes
- Four no
- One no answer

Question 40-Does your purchasing department buy furniture from the state's prison industries?

- One response for varies
- Three yes
- Two no
- One no answer

Question 41-Please indicate which procurement method you use most frequently for the following goods and services. (Check one method per product category. *Includes preferred source commodities and services from Industries for the Blind, etc.

Question 41a-Chairs and tables

- State contracts-five responses
- Cooperatively bid contracts-two responses
- Competitive bidding/RTP-four responses

Question 41b-Office furniture

- State contracts-six responses
- Cooperatively bid contracts-one responses
- Competitive bidding/RTP-four responses

Question 41c-Counters, service desks, computer furniture

- State contracts-five responses
- Cooperatively bid contracts-two responses
- Competitive bidding/RTP-four responses

Question 41d-Dining furniture

- State contracts-five responses
- Cooperatively bid contracts-one responses
- Competitive bidding/RTP-five responses

Question 41e-Storage and work room furniture

- State contracts-five responses
- Cooperatively bid contracts-no responses
- Competitive bidding/RTP-four responses

Question 41f-Specialty furniture

- State contracts-five responses
- Cooperatively bid contracts- one response
- Competitive bidding/RTP-four responses
- No bidding/negotiation-one response

Question 41g-Furniture services

- State contracts-three responses
- Cooperatively bid contracts-no responses
- Competitive bidding/RTP-three responses
- No answer-one response

Question 42-What do you think of the benefits of the state central purchasing department for state central purchasing-opinion-

Question 42a-State central purchasing provides lower prices or better value?

- An average of 2.6 on a five point scale for five respondents

Question 42b-State central purchasing saves time and administration costs?

- An average of 3.6 on a five point scale for five respondents

Question 42c-State central purchasing-more choices in vendors and products?

- An average of 2.2 on a five point scale for five respondents

Question 42d-State central purchasing-opinions-provides better quality goods and services?

- An average of 2.4 on a five point scale for five respondents

Question 43-Does the purchasing department have a website that includes information about how it procures goods and services?

- Yes-three of six responses
- No-three of six responses
- One response included yes and no and reported the procurement code is on the website

Question 44-What type of information and functions are available for vendors on your website if your unit has one?

- Contacts in the purchasing department-one response
- Request to bids-three responses
- Purchasing policies-three responses
- Bid documents-four responses
- Notices of award-one response
- One no answer

Question 45-Please indicate the tasks the procurement staff perform using the Internet or an internal network in procuring goods and services for your unit.

- Research products and prices-six responses
- Research vendor specifications-five responses
- Communicate with other government units-three responses
- Make small \$ purchases-three responses
- Accept bids and proposals online-two responses
- No responses from one respondent

Question 46-What is the principal means that departments use to requisition goods and services in your unit?

- Paper forms-three responses
- Emails-three responses
- Electric purchase order system-two responses
- Fax-one response
- Work order-one response
- No answer-one response

Question 47-Can vendors submit bids electronically?

- Yes-two response
- No-three response
- No answer-two responses

Question 48-What is the average time from the publication of the contract notice to the award of the contract?

- Varies-two responses
- 15-20 days-one response
- 2-3 weeks-one response
- 3-4 weeks-one responses
- 30-45 days-one response
- 45 days-one response

Question 49-How are the winning bids and vendors evaluated?

- Price, specification, service-one response
- Qualifications, bid amount-one response
- Price and delivery-one response
- Approved by superintendent/finance director-one response
- Per the procurement code-one response
- Varies-low bidder is usually an important factor-one response
- Depends upon processed, looking for best value-one response

Question 50-How can bidders get information on the evaluation of bids?

- Make request-six responses
- No answer-one response

Question 51-How many days are bids held open?

- Varies-two responses
- 10 to 14 days-two responses
- Set by the bid-one response
- 7 to 30 days-one response
- No answer-one response

Question 52-When/how will the final choice be communicated?

- By purchase order, e procurement purchase order and verbal contact-two responses
- By letter notification-three responses
- By bid tabulation-one response
- After evaluation via intent to award notice-one response

Question 53-Is it possible to receive e-mail alerts for notices of future bids?

- Yes-one response
- Maybe-one response
- No-five no's

Question 54-Is there a standard policy for vendor certification and qualification before bids are awarded?

- Yes-three responses
- No-two responses
- Varies-one response
- Non answer-one response

Question 55-Is vendor bonding necessary before bids are awarded?

- Yes-three responses
- No-two responses
- Varies-one response
- No answer-one response

Question 56-What problems have you experienced in purchasing furniture that you feel should be addressed as a long term reoccurring problem and what is the solution you recommend?

- Mostly shipping damage-one response
- End users want to see samples-not often available, a mobile showroom would be helpful to visit districts-one response

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