

Somerset County Board of Education

Policy Guidelines

Policy # 400-10

SELECTION OF ARCHITECT/ENGINEER/CONSTRUCTION CONSULTANTS

1. Pre-qualification: Any Architect, Engineer, or construction consultant interested in being considered for selection for the design of school construction projects must be pre-qualified, which can occur at any time. Firms shall submit, on an annual basis, a copy of U.S. Government Standard Form (SF) 254 to the Facilities Department. Each firm must also submit its Maryland Registration Number. Firms applying for pre-qualification may also submit brochures or any other relative information to supplement the SF254. Only those firms denied pre-qualification will be directly notified.
2. Public Notice: The services of Architects, Engineers, and construction consultants will be solicited for proposed school projects by directly notifying all pre-qualified architects/engineers, posting the Request for Proposals (RFP) or Request for Qualifications (RFQ) on the Board of Education website on the Facilities Department homepage, posting in a public plan room and/or eMaryland Marketplace
3. Application: Pre-qualified interested architects, engineers and construction consultants may submit expressions of interest to the Facilities Department for consideration on specific projects. A separate expression of interest must be submitted for each project. Included with their expression(s) of interest, the firms shall submit two (2) copies of the U.S. Government Standard Form (SF) 255. Additional information, if pertinent, may be transmitted along with the SF 255.
4. Screening Committee / Shortlisting: The Screening Committee shall be composed as a minimum of three (3) members appointed by the Superintendent of Schools. The committee shall screen the credentials of all firms responding to the Public Notice. The screening shall be based on individual project criteria and shall include such considerations as:
 - General competence (including technical consultants)
 - Geographic information
 - Quality of previous work
 - Cost consciousness of the firm
 - Capacity of firm and staff availability to accomplish proposed work in required time
 - Comparable experience and firm expertise
 - Completeness of ProposalFollowing the screening of all qualified applicants, the committee will determine which firms to invite for interviews.

5. Selection Committee / Superintendent Recommendation: The Selection Committee shall be composed as a minimum of five (5) members appointed by the Superintendent of Schools, including at least three (3) members of the community. After completing the interviews, the committee shall select and rank, in priority order, at least three (3) firms. The rationale for selection and ranking shall be documented and submitted to the Superintendent of Schools.
6. Fee Negotiation: Negotiations shall be conducted by the Superintendent's designee with the highest ranked firm to enter into an agreement for professional services at a compensation which is determined to be fair and reasonable. If unable to negotiate a satisfactory agreement with the firm ranked to be the most qualified, negotiations with that firm shall terminate, and the next ranked (second ranked) firm shall begin the process to be the most qualified in the same manner. If the designee is unable to negotiate a satisfactory agreement with the second ranked firm, it shall terminate negotiations with that firm, and shall then negotiate with the third-ranked firm to be the most qualified in the same manner.

If the designee is unable to negotiate a satisfactory agreement with the third ranked firm, it shall terminate negotiations with that firm. Should the designee be unable to negotiate a satisfactory agreement with any of these selected and ranked approved firms, the designee shall select additional firms in order of their qualifications and repeat the procedures as outlined in the Qualification section and the Fee Negotiation section herein. The firm selected for negotiations will be furnished a copy of the architectural program and requirements for each project by the Facilities Department. The firm selected for negotiations shall prepare a complete proposal based on the scope of work, including a detailed breakdown of proposed fees for all services on a form approved by Somerset County Public Schools including the requirements of the Public School Construction Program and the architectural program.

7. Final Selection: Following the negotiation of a satisfactory agreement, the committee shall submit the firm recommended for appointment, along with the negotiated fee to the Superintendent of Schools. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the selected firm and the shall be submitted to the Board of Education for approval to enter into an agreement. Following the entering into an agreement with the appointed firm, a copy of the agreement shall be submitted to the Public School Construction Program.

In the event the Board of Education rejects the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, the committee shall be instructed to submit from the previously selected and ranked firms, a new firm and/or negotiated fee.

For those school construction projects anticipated to cost less than \$500,000 for construction, or repeat plans or other extraordinary situations, the Superintendent of Schools may waive the architectural, engineering, construction consultant selection process. The Superintendent of Schools will select the firm as appropriate; however, the agreement shall be on a negotiated fixed fee basis.