



Date: **November 14, 2023**
Prepared by: **Amy Janssens, Associate Director – Corporate Services & Treasurer**
Subject: **Broader Public Sector Procurement Directive Update**

Background

The Broader Public Sector (“BPS”) Procurement Directive has been in place since July 1, 2011. The St. Clair Catholic District School Board is required to comply with the BPS Procurement Directive as a designated broader public sector organization, set out in section 1(1) of the *Broader Public Sector Accountability Act, 2010*. The BPS Procurement Directive is the guide that public organizations use to ensure goods and services are acquired openly, fairly and transparently.

Recently, the Ontario Government announced that an updated version of the BPS Procurement Directive will come into effect on January 1, 2024. This update includes additional requirements to support both procurement centralization and the government’s Building Ontario Businesses Initiative (BOBI). The following are some of the key changes to the Directive:

- Update to competitive procurement threshold to \$121,200 (previously \$100,000) to align with trade agreements. This is the baseline threshold required for open competitive procurement processes.
- Changes in language that better aligns to trade agreements. For example, language is more inclusive for all vendors, domestic and international and considers minimum posting times based on trade agreement thresholds.
- Specific references to the Canadian Free Trade Agreement (CFTA) and Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA). Although Ontario is party to many domestic and international trade agreements, CFTA and CETA have the lowest domestic and international monetary thresholds and are used as the benchmark requirements to meet or exceed obligations under other trade agreements.

The Board’s Purchasing Policy does not require any change at this time and is scheduled to be reviewed during the 2024-25 school year under the Board’s regular policy review schedule. The Purchasing Procedures will be updated as of January 1, 2024, to include the small changes noted above and will be reposted on the Board’s public facing website at that time.

Additionally, the government introduced *Building Ontario Businesses Initiative Act* (BOBIA) as part of the *Fewer Fees, Better Services Act* on February 24, 2022. When in force, BOBIA will require public sector entities to give Ontario businesses preference when conducting procurement processes for goods and services under a specified threshold. BOBIA will come into force when regulations are introduced, targeted for January 2024.



Staff will continue to review the changes and related information as it becomes available and will ensure requirements are reflected in the Board's Purchasing Procedures. The procurement team will support all staff with the implementation of these changes.

Recommendations

That the St. Clair Catholic District School Board receive the report: *Broader Public Sector Procurement Directive Update*, for information.