Board Policy Equity Lens Tool

Title of board policy being reviewed:

DJG-Vendor Relations

Describe the purpose of this policy:

The purpose of this policy is to establish fair and responsible purchasing practices by providing opportunities for qualified suppliers to conduct business with MESD. It also establishes oversight of advertising and prohibits employees from receiving compensation from vendors, promoting ethical conduct and accountability.

What is your experience with this policy:

This is a straightforward purchasing and vendor relations policy that establishes expectations for fair supplier access and ethical business practices. Its primary equity consideration is ensuring that procurement opportunities are accessible to a broad range of qualified suppliers. Transparent procedures, consistent application, and outreach to underrepresented businesses can help support equitable participation while maintaining fiscal responsibility.

Superintendent Dr. Paul Coakley

Board of Directors Renee Anderson • Jessica Arzate • Kristin Cornuelle • Katrina Doughty • Dr. Samuel Henry • Denyse Peterson • Helen Ying

What is the plan to communicate this policy to staff, students, and/or families? What is the plan to communicate this policy to linguistically diverse students and their families?

This policy and a summary of this policy will be available on the MESD web page. The summary of this policy is also available on the MESD website in Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Somali, and Vietnamese and, upon request, the summary and/or policy may be translated into other languages.

Is this policy:

Easy to locate for staff?

This policy and a summary of this policy will be available on the MESD web page. The summary of this policy is also available on the MESD website in Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Somali, and Vietnamese and, upon request, the summary and/or policy may be translated into other languages.

Accessible to students and families?

This policy and a summary of this policy will be available on the MESD web page. The summary of this policy is also available on the MESD website in Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Somali, and Vietnamese and, upon request, the summary and/or policy may be translated into other languages.

Included in onboarding, intake, or other training?

This policy will be available in the Board's online handbook. The policy will also be posted on the district website for easy access.

Clear and easy to understand?

Yes. The policy clearly outlines expectations for supplier access, purchasing procedures, advertising approval, and employee conduct. However, additional administrative procedures will be important to clarify how suppliers can participate in purchasing opportunities and how purchasing decisions are made.

People

How are people affected positively or negatively by the policy? What potential barriers might people encounter? What barriers might be reduced by this policy?

The policy positively supports fair competition by providing opportunities for responsible suppliers to do business with MESD. It also protects public resources by prohibiting employees from receiving vendor compensation.

Potential barriers include limited awareness of purchasing opportunities, complex procurement requirements, or challenges faced by smaller businesses. Clear and accessible purchasing procedures can help reduce these barriers.

Can you identify the racial or ethnic groups affected by this policy, program, practice, or decision? Do you know the potential impacts to these populations? If you don't know, how will you find out?

The policy does not directly identify or affect specific racial or ethnic groups. However, businesses owned by individuals from historically underserved racial and ethnic communities may experience barriers to accessing public contracting opportunities.

Equitable implementation can help ensure that minority-owned businesses and other underrepresented suppliers have fair opportunities to compete for MESD contracts.

Were these populations involved in any way, at any point in the development, implementation, and evaluation of this policy? If so, when and how?

The policy does not indicate whether suppliers, community members, or historically underserved populations were involved in its development.

Future review of purchasing procedures could include feedback from vendors, particularly small and historically underrepresented businesses, to identify potential barriers to participation.

What priorities and commitments are communicated by this policy?

The policy communicates commitments to fairness, ethical conduct, accountability, and responsible stewardship of public funds. It emphasizes providing opportunities for responsible suppliers while maintaining appropriate oversight of purchasing and advertising activities.

Place

What kind of positive or negative environment are we creating?

What are the barriers to more equitable outcomes? (e.g. mandated, political, emotional, financial, programmatic or managerial)

The policy creates an environment that supports ethical purchasing, fair competition, and responsible business relationships.

Potential barriers to equitable outcomes include complex bidding requirements, limited vendor outreach, lack of awareness of contracting opportunities, and differences in the resources available to small or emerging businesses.

Power

How is the power of decision-making shared with those it affects?

How have you intentionally involved the communities affected by this policy, program, practice, or decision?

The policy provides opportunities for suppliers to conduct business with MESD while placing responsibility for purchasing procedures and advertising approval with the Superintendent or designee.

Although the policy does not establish a formal role for vendors in decision-making, transparent procurement processes and opportunities for vendor feedback can help promote fairness and accessibility.

Process

Does the policy, program, or decision improve, worsen, or make no change to existing disparities?

Does it create other unintended consequences?

The policy has the potential to improve equity by establishing an expectation that all responsible suppliers have opportunities to do business with MESD.

However, disparities could persist if purchasing opportunities are not widely communicated or if procurement procedures unintentionally favor larger or more established vendors. An unintended consequence could be limited participation by smaller or historically underrepresented businesses.

Plan

How will you reduce the negative impacts and address the barriers?

Potential negative impacts can be reduced by developing clear and accessible purchasing procedures, broadly advertising procurement opportunities, and ensuring consistent and transparent vendor selection practices.

MESD can also review vendor participation patterns and seek feedback from suppliers to identify and address barriers while maintaining compliance with applicable procurement laws.