

Houston County School System

Perry, Georgia

Three-Year Technology Plan

July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2017



**HOUSTON COUNTY
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

HIGH-ACHIEVING STUDENTS

Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Mark Scott

Components for System-Level Technology Plan

I. Vision for Technology Use

The mission of the Houston County School System is to produce high-achieving students.

The vision of the Houston County School System is that our system will be world-class.

The objective of this technology plan is to support the system mission and vision at all levels.

Component	
<p><i>a. District Mission/ Vision and Access</i></p>	<p>The mission of the Houston County School System is to produce high-achieving students. The vision of the Houston County School System is that our system will be world-class. The objective of this technology plan is to support the system mission and vision at all levels. The goal of this plan is to provide staff, students and parents with essential technological resources and support to ensure all students are afforded high quality 21st Century learning experiences.</p> <p>Houston County is committed to the belief that the effective use of technologies will enhance the quality of teaching and learning and increase student achievement. We envision an educational environment that is rich with opportunities for all learners to be exposed to the benefits of the latest emerging technologies. This educational environment will allow our students to be high achievers, life-long learners, and successful in an ever changing society.</p> <p>The Houston County Technology Plan has a specific vision to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • allocate instructional resources to ensure equity among all student subpopulations • provide instructional and administrative resources via a collaborative environment • integrate technology into the classroom environment • support stakeholder use of technology • provide the most modern technology hardware and software to enhance instruction • provide mechanism for students to realize “any time/anywhere/any device” learning • support movement toward a more personalized and blended learning environment • support schools in attaining STEM certification <p>It is our plan to utilize technologies such as video streaming and video conferencing in order to better provide the rigorous educational environment and academic courses that our students of today need to prepare for future endeavors.</p>

II. Current Reality

Component	
<p><i>a. Access to Technology/Data Sources</i></p>	<p>According to the technology inventory survey, the Houston County School System presently has 11,024 instructional computers. The Houston County School System has 1821 total classrooms, with a ratio of 2.51:1 students per computer.</p>

The Houston County School System supports several initiatives that assist in providing equitable use opportunities for technology-supported learning across the system, both at school and at home. One of those initiatives, Georgia Virtual School, is a year-round, tuition-based program offering online courses developed and taught by certified teachers. Virtual learning instruction involves teaching students course content via the Internet. As in a traditional, face-to-face classroom, teachers facilitate daily learning activities such as discussion, projects, labs, group work, and writing workshops. By providing feedback, remediation, and enrichment, virtual learning instructors guide students through content-approved courses that meet the requirements for the state mandated curriculum.

Students can take classes during the regular school day for no cost to them under the state and local rules established to govern the Georgia Virtual School. Enrollment for the supplemental, tuition-based program will not be limited per school. Students can enroll in supplemental classes, beyond their school day schedule, during fall, spring, and summer semesters for a fee.

The Houston County School System provides resources to parents and community through the Internet. There are also opportunities for technology-supported learning beyond school for students, parents, and staff. A web page of online resources is available to the learning community. In addition to the web page, there are learning opportunities for students participating in after-school programs that provide for enrichment and remediation.

Classworks, a curriculum-management system, allows teachers to customize learning paths and document student progress. This is available to all K-8 students, selected 9-12 students, teachers, and administrators. Classworks supports standards-based education by aligning content with state standards.

Currently the system is compiling a list of curriculum software for all levels of instruction within the county. This will be published on the system's web page and used to ensure access of resources across the system. This will maximize professional learning opportunities for students and staff.

All Houston County schools are completely networked. We have wired and wireless network access for each classroom, computer lab and media center. In addition, each office, conference room, auditorium, lunchroom, and other usable space is connected to the school's local area network. The network connections are powered by 1 GB Ethernet switches. All schools participate in a wide-area network (WAN), with all schools at 2 GB private fiber network. The WAN is powered by Unite Private Networks and is partially funded by E-Rate. Connectivity to the Internet is provided by the system's Technology Service Center where the connections are centered at a speed of 1.155 GB, .155 GB provided by Georgia K-12 Educational Network Consortium and 1 GB locally purchased from Windstream.

b. Technology Use

Instructional uses of technology

Houston County currently utilizes a wide variety of technology related tools to enhance the instructional process. Through the use of wide area network connecting all campus locations and offices, Houston County is able to provide collaboration, communication, and instructional resources. Hardware resources at all schools include computer labs, student and teacher workstations and network printers. All classrooms have interactive boards and projectors. Core academic classrooms have document cameras. Some classrooms have teacher devices and student response devices. Our district is currently implementing BYOD on a voluntary basis - Bring Your Own Device. Students are allowed to "bring their own device" and use it for instructional purposes in the classroom. Software resources in all schools include MS Office 365, Classworks (a curriculum management system), Surpass (school media services), and Infinite Campus, our Student Information System (online grade book and attendance).

We are currently using MS Office SharePoint Server 2007 (MOSS) to increase collaboration and communication in a secure environment. MOSS is an integrated suite of server capabilities that will improve organizational effectiveness by providing comprehensive content management, accelerating shared educational processes, and facilitating information-sharing across boundaries for better instructional insight. MOSS supports all intranet, extranet, and Web applications across an enterprise within one integrated platform. Each county level department has developed a collaborative workspace. Similar efforts have been completed at the school level to facilitate collaboration. Curriculum and resources are housed within a site specific to each content area.

Professional learning opportunities are made available at the county and school level to support instructional technology. The Instructional Technology Department works with the administrators, teachers, and Central Office personnel to redeliver professional learning as determined by system and school teaching and learning goals. We have 3 CIS (Curriculum Integration Specialists) on staff to assist with Professional Learning activities.

Use of Technology

Students:

- Have access to connected technologies to analyze, collaborate, process, and disseminate information in order to increase student achievement.
- Have access to connected technologies for instructional purposes including enrichment and/or remediation.
- Utilize telecommunications systems and real time web-based applications, in order to effectively communicate with administrators, teachers, parents, and fellow students.
- Middle and High school students utilize global electronic mail, high school and middle school students' use unique ID's in order to effectively communicate with administrators, teachers, parents and fellow students.
- Reach age-appropriate technology literacy levels.
- Are enabled to meet the challenge of a changing society and economy through the use of technology resources including BYOD.

Teachers:

- Utilize technology resources to enhance classroom instruction and improve student achievement.
- Endorse performance-based standards that define appropriate use of technologies of students at each grade level.
- Have access to connected technologies to analyze, collaborate, and disseminate information in a real-time environment. Utilize technology resources to actively engage students in their own learning process in a standards-based classroom.
- Utilize global electronic mail, telecommunications systems, and real time web-based applications, through unique user ID's in order to effectively communicate with students, parents, fellow teachers, and administrators.
- Utilize technology resources to electronically archive, retrieve, analyze, collaborate, and produce reports.
- Have accessibility via a secured network to essential organized data, which has been collected from a variety of sources, and organized and used in school improvement activities. The available data includes methods for disaggregation into appropriate subgroups.
- Are supported through appropriate professional learning opportunities.

Administrators:

- Utilize technology resources to enhance the school's instructional process and to improve student achievement.
- Utilize technology resources to improve the overall effectiveness of school management.
- Have access to connected technologies to analyze, collaborate, and disseminate information in a real-time environment.
- Utilize technology resources to support teachers and staff in classroom instruction.
- Utilize global electronic mail, telecommunications systems, hand-held cellular devices (partially funded by E-Rate) and real time web-based applications, through unique user ID's, in order to effectively communicate with students, specialists, parents, teachers, fellow administrators, and the community.
- Utilize technology resources to electronically archive, retrieve, analyze, collaborate, and produce reports.
- Have accessibility via a secured network to essential organized data, which has been collected from a variety of sources, and organized and used in school improvement activities. The available data includes methods for disaggregation into appropriate subgroups.
- Are supported through appropriate professional learning opportunities.

	<p>Parents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are provided access to grades, homework assignments, attendance, and other student information through a web-based system. • Are provided a wealth of information through our system website, Facebook, and Twitter <p>Application Systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use technology resources to increase awareness of how technology can be used to motivate and encourage student learning in a standards-based classroom. • Use electronic assessments to evaluate the needs of students and assess their progress in meeting educational goals. • Use instructional software in several languages to assist Limited English Proficiency students. • Provide funding sufficient to provide access to instructional software from all classrooms, media centers, and labs. • Provide Internet connectivity with filtering and virus spyware. • Acquire software that correlates to the state curriculum. • Provide technology resources and training to process data. <p>Desired Technology Infrastructure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a robust, stable, and secured network. • Standardize modern hardware. • Fund technology infrastructure. • Provide competent technology support. • Provide assistive technology for students with disabilities. • Provide support technology resources for students who are hospital homebound and students who are assigned to alternative school settings. • Provide interactive and presentation technology equipment as part of the classroom infrastructure. • Provide a convergence of video, voice, and data though network infrastructure upgrade.
<p>c. Gap Analysis</p>	<p>After reviewing the System Technology Inventory and compiling data, it was ascertained that an acceptable inventory of hardware and peripheral devices as well as software was available, but some devices are substandard and in need of a refresh.</p> <p>Our goal is to provide a standardized solution that is equitable to all classrooms and will meet the needs of the students and online testing requirements. Each classroom should also have access to mobile devices to supplement our BYOD initiative.</p> <p>The Houston County Board of Education also provides system-wide remote access to on-line resources. These resources are posted on the website: www.hcbe.net. These on-line resources provide equitable access for students who have after school internet access.</p>

Houston County School System, as evidenced by the inventory surveys, has worked diligently to lower the computer to student ratio. The system has reached an acceptable student to computer ratio. There is a need, however, to begin phasing out computers that no longer meet system hardware specifications, and to increase the student to computer ratio to satisfy the stated goals. Technology purchases must align with the system's vision and technology goals. All products should be assessed for compatibility with existing software.

The greatest technology needs of the Houston County School System include:

- Adding additional technology in the classroom for student use to enhance the technology standards and supplement BYOD.
- Refreshing Media Center Computers.
- Continue to streamline communication with parents through the local HCBE website.
- Providing software instruction after the school day.
- Providing additional teacher training on effectively integrating technology.
- Providing assistance with the disaggregation of student data for administration and teachers.
- Establishing procedures and safe guards for future software purchases.

The system's mission statement is to produce high-achieving students. To continue on this pathway, the system must narrow the achievement gap between subgroups of students. Integrating technology into the instruction can assist with these students. The data reveals that many of these students attend the Title I schools in the system.

Special Education and ELL teachers were consulted to determine their hardware, software and resource needs. The Technology, Teaching and Learning, and Student Services departments have combined resources to provide the support needed for the teachers to meet the achievement goals established for their students. Houston County will focus on providing additional computers for the special needs students during the next three school years by supplying the special education classrooms with additional computers from SPLOST funds (pending availability) or local funds.

Strategic Plan

<p>Strategic Goal 1:</p>	<p>Student Achievement Performance Objective 1.1 - Ensure mastery of the standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiative 1.1.A - Provide high-quality instruction that is aligned with state standards. • Initiative 1.1.C - Implement a balanced assessment approach to include diagnostic, formative, and summative assessments to design and adjust instruction to maximize student achievement. • Initiative 1.1.D - Integrate technology into curriculum, instruction, and assessment to improve student achievement. 			
Strategies	Benchmark	Evaluation Method	Funding Source/Amount	Person Responsible
<p>Effective use of instructional technology in order to provide 21st Century learning environments.</p>	<p>Formal and informal classroom observations by school and system administrators and support personnel.</p>	<p>Results of locally developed technology survey relating to instructional technology usage.</p>	<p>\$250/year - cost of electronic survey generator.</p> <p>FY2016 Costs of adding additional computer labs, 30 computers in each lab, with Thin Clients at each of the 38 schools: \$500,000 SPLOST (Pending availability of funds) OR 13"lap tops - \$680,000 SPLOST (Pending availability of funds)</p> <p>FY2017 and beyond: Costs of adding 4-6 additional student classroom devices such as ipads, 13" laptops, or ipad minis. SPLOST (\$2M-\$5M)</p>	<p>Classroom Teachers School And System Administration Teaching and Learning Department Professional Learning Department</p>
<p>Effective use of Sharepoint to provide a mechanism for collaborative instructional planning aligned with the state standards.</p>	<p>Monitor the usage of Sharepoint for instructional collaboration</p>	<p>Increasing quantity of content posted on and usage of Sharepoint.</p>	<p>No costs associated currently with version of Sharepoint</p> <p>Sharepoint Up-Grade Costs (\$5-\$10/per student cost to Replace or Upgrade) SPLOST/Local Funds</p>	<p>School and System Administration</p>

Analyze data using technology applications to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses to guide informed decision making.	Student performance data posted to Sharepoint and reported to schools in a timely manner.	Student Performance Data Document provided yearly to schools and system level administrators. Classroom and school level data documents such as pivot tables, charts, graphs, and the SLDS provided by the State DOE.	No costs associated with current version of Sharepoint Sharepoint Up-Grade Costs (\$5-\$10/per student costs to Replace or Upgrade) SPLOST/Local Funds	Classroom Teachers School and System Administration Teaching and Learning Department
Utilization of Interactive Boards for engaging students and integrating technology into the curriculum.	Formal and informal classroom observations by school and system administrators and support personnel.	Results of locally developed technology survey relating to instructional technology usage.	FY15-FY17 -Cost of Smart Notebook Advantage Software with VE student response capabilities - 3yrs/\$49,989 - SPLOST Upkeep and maintenance (refresh) of Projectors and Interactive Board for classroom use \$300,000/year - SPLOST	Classroom Teachers School and System Administration Teaching and Learning Department Technology Department
Provide students and staff access to instructional technology for research and global connections that support the curriculum and educational goals of the school system.	10 Thin Clients in Primary and Elementary Schools 15 Thin Clients in Middle Schools 30 Thin Clients in High Schools	Monitoring of usage by Media Specialists.	Costs: FY 2015 - Thin Client Solution for media centers 10 for Primary and Elementary schools, 15 for middle schools, 30 for high schools. \$222,120 FY2015- Additional Network Drops in Media Centers - \$25,000	Media Specialists Technology Department Teaching and Learning Department

<p>Instructional computer programs and resources to meet the educational needs of all students.</p>	<p>Student enrollment in computer based instructional programs.</p>	<p>Successful completion of participation in computer based instructional programs.</p>	<p>Tie Net - \$74,971/year -local funds</p> <p>Classworks - FY 2017 \$388,215 / local funds for 3 year renewal</p> <p>Novanet -\$72,895/year - local funds</p> <p>Edmentum -\$23,000/yr - local funds</p> <p>Georgia Virtual School \$250 per student/per class</p> <p>Edmodo - No Cost</p>	<p>Classroom Teachers School and System Administration Teaching and Learning Department Student Services Department Technology Department School Operations</p>
<p>Provide students and staff anytime /anywhere equitable and easy access to web based learning technologies to collaborate, publish, and interact with others.</p>	<p>Implementation and maintenance of Office 365.</p>	<p>Analysis of student access and usage reports.</p>	<p>No Costs</p>	<p>Technology Department Classroom Teachers School and System Administration</p>

Strategic Goal 2:	Student and Stakeholder Engagement Performance Objective 2.1 – Ensure a safe and enriching school environment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Initiative 2.1. A - Develop a systematic approach to providing a safe learning environment for all stakeholders</i> Performance Objective 2.2 – Encourage student and stakeholder involvement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Initiative 2.2 A - Increase the ability of all parents to support their student’s academic growth.</i> <i>Initiative 2.2.B - Communicate with stakeholders at the system and school level.</i> 			
Strategies	Benchmark	Evaluation Method	Funding Source/Amount	Person Responsible
Students will be afforded opportunities to learn and practice internet safety that meets the Child Internet Protection Act (CIPA) guidelines and the Houston County Schools acceptable internet use policy.	Monitoring lesson plans and classroom instruction by the school administration.	100% of schools with plans of teaching CIPA standards to students.	\$0 Funds	Classroom Teachers School Administration School Operations Department
Utilize Ident-a-kid for school visitors and check outs to ensure a safe learning environment.	Monitor the effective use of the Ident-a-kid Software ensuring all visitors check in using the software.	Reports available at any time to schools to be able to analyze the number of documented visitors using the software as well as student tardies and early dismissals.	Costs: Renewal of Ident-a-kid software - \$240/school, \$7,980/year. Local Funds	Technology Department School Administration School Office Staffs
Continue to implement and support BYOD in all schools.	Administrators observing students engaged in hands-on learning through the use of their own device.	Number of devices connecting to our district’s WIFI network.	Costs of maintaining WIFI network: paid for through FY17 Local funds	Professional Learning Department Technology Department Teaching and Learning Department
Continue to provide a web-based parent interface for the secure access to their child’s information such as: grades, attendance and assignments.	Monitor parent usage of Infinite campus at the school and system level.	Usage reports from Infinite Campus.	Costs for Infinite Campus renewals: Currently paid for through FY15 Beginning FY 16 - \$252,000/year - Local Funds	Technology Department

Provide communication technology tools for administrators, teachers, parents and students.	Monitor the effective use and implementation of the various communication technology tools.	Usage of the various communication technology tools.	Costs of: School Messenger \$76,000/ 2 years - good through FY15 - Local funds Infinite Campus - \$252,000/year - Local funds School In-Sites - \$62,000/year - Local funds Office 365 - no cost Edmodo - No cost	Classroom Teachers School Administrators Technology Department School Operations Department
The system will maintain and improve a wide area network (WAN) linking all campus LANS and system offices. All nodes on the WAN will have high bandwidth access to the Internet. A firewall will be maintained at a central location to screen inappropriate sites and to insure that student access to the Internet will be safe and rewarding.	Monitor internet connectivity and resolve issues.	Analyze KACE reports in regards to network issues.	\$502,822/year E-Rate Funds \$215,495/year Local Funds IBoss Content Filter cost: \$32,500/year - Local funds Sonic Wall (Internet Firewall) cost: \$35,000/year Additional 1GB bandwidth through Windstream: \$49,920/year	Technology Department
Provide community with technology literacy classes though the career and technical educational program.	Number of participants attending.	Number of participants completing courses.	\$0 local funds	Teaching and Learning
Utilize a Technology Committee made up of stakeholders to conduct a technology needs assessment and adjust and develop a technology plan as needed.	Participation at Committee Meetings.	A Technology Plan will be in place Results of needs assessment Results of Surveys of staff	\$0 Local Funds	Technology Department Committee Members

The system will maintain and support a voice-over-IP solution within the network infrastructure.	Monitor tele-communications support through the district.	Results of locally developed technology survey relating to instructional technology usage.	\$39,744/year E-Rate Funds \$17,860/year Local Funds Support: \$31,000/year Local	Technology Department
Administrative personnel will be provided hand held cellular-based personal digital devices for communications and data access.	Purchasing department monitor usage of devices	24/7 access to data and communication services	Cost for cell phones: \$176,400.00 E-Rate Funds \$75,600.00 Local Funds Cost for AirWatch Mobile Device Management system: \$10,000/year	Technology Department Purchasing Department
Utilize survey software to collect input and feedback from stakeholders.	Usage of surveys by schools and departments.	Effectiveness of the survey generator	Costs of the survey generator.	School and System Administration

Strategic Goal 3:	Organizational Effectiveness Performance Objective 3.1 – Facilitate and monitor organizational processes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Initiative 3.1.D – Ensure equitable access, reliability, and use of system technology resources.</i> • <i>Initiative 3.1.E Implement policies and procedures to ensure organizational effectiveness.</i> 			
Strategies	Benchmark	Evaluation Method	Funding Source/Amount	Person Responsible
Use of student information system to maintain student attendance, assessment and performance data, discipline referrals, special accommodations, and other pertinent student-related classroom data.	Monitor usage of Infinite Campus.	Successful record keeping documentation.	Cost for Infinite Campus Renewal: \$200,000/year - Local Funds	Technology Department School and System Employees
Maintain a comprehensive, accurate, and up to date inventory of all system technological devices including warranty information.	Accurate inventory for quick replacement of parts, planning for future refreshes, etc.	Completed inventory	Cost for Mobile Asset \$7,500/year	Warehouse Technician Title I Director Student Services School Administrators
Provide critical updates and maintenance on technology equipment through the Helpdesk, imaging of computers, computer management and software distributed by software library.	Effective utilization of software to provide maximum use of technology.	Analysis of reports reflecting number and status of Helpdesk tickets, current system update status, monitoring of software installation and identification of operating system concerns.	KACE \$35,000 / year Local funds	Technology Department School and System Employees

<p>Administrative personnel will be provided hand held cellular-based personal digital devices for communications and data access.</p>	<p>24/7 contact with administrators</p>	<p>Usage reports</p>	<p>\$176,400/year E-Rate Funds \$75,600/year Local Funds</p>	<p>Technology Department Purchasing Department</p>
<p>Implementation of new computer system software for financial, human resource, benefits, nutrition and purchasing departments to improve administrative services.</p>	<p>Monitor transition to and efficiency of new software system</p>	<p>Effective and efficient departmental processes Department Audit Results</p>	<p>Initial Program Costs: \$1,382,490.00 - SPLOST</p>	<p>Deputy Superintendent for Administrative Services Assistant Superintendent for Business Operations Technology Department School and System Employees</p>

Strategic Goal 4:	Learning and Growth Performance Objective 4.2 - Provide valuable professional learning. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Initiative 4.1A - Provide professional learning communities focused on producing high achieving students.</i> Performance Objective 4.2 - Enhance continuous improvement processes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Initiative 4.1.B - Build capacity for continuous improvement by ensuring that research-based practices are consistently utilized for classified employees. (Technology Training)</i> 			
Strategies	Benchmark	Evaluation Method	Funding Source/Amount	Person Responsible
Conduct high quality professional learning sessions to train teachers and administrators on how to effectively integrate technology in the classroom.	Participation in professional learning sessions.	Classroom observations and walkthroughs Student feedback	Local professional learning funds Title IIA Funds as available	Professional Learning Curriculum Integration Specialist Technology Department Teaching and Learning Department System and School Administrators Teachers
Conduct high quality professional learning for school and system level personnel on how to use technology tools to document, collect, analyze and utilize data to improve student achievement.	Participation in professional learning sessions	Evidence of effective utilization of technology tools	Local professional learning funds Title IIA Funds as available	Professional Learning Technology Department System and School Administrators Teachers
Provide on-going training and support for HCBOE members to use technology for system administrative purposes.	Participation in training and utilization of technology	Board members, superintendent and board attorney conducting board meetings using paperless system	\$0 - Local Funds	Technology Department Professional Learning Dept
Conduct high quality professional learning for school and system level personnel on a variety of system and state computer programs /software to successfully collect report and submit required documentation.	Participation in training and utilization of technology	Evidence of accurate record keeping and reporting	Local professional learning funds	Technology Department Professional Learning System and School Employees

III. Communication and Marketing

Component	
a. Communication/Marketing	Multiple methods of sharing progress, disseminating evaluation results and marketing are provided such as the monthly electronic Board of Education newsletter that is provided to stakeholders. HCBOE website and local school websites which contain updated information. School Councils, phone messenger systems, press releases, SharePoint Portal are additional communication tools available to stakeholders.
b. Integration/coordination with long-range planning initiatives	The system technology committee consists of personnel from the technology department, system-level staff development, teaching and learning, school operations, finance, media services, Title I, student services, ESOL, school administrators and school level technology coordinators. All proposed initiatives are brought before the committee such as hardware specifications, software implementation, and technology related upgrades or purchases.

IV. Professional Development

Component	
a. Professional Development	Professional Development programs are clearly outlined and support the overall system and school performance goals. Funding for professional development is provided by local, state, or federal allocations. Professional learning in the school system is directly linked to established instructional practices to support student achievement. Each school has established a professional learning community to further enhance and support the school performance goals. New employees receive training on effective use of system technology tools. The training involves processes, programs and procedures to support the instructional setting. System level staff is provided the opportunity to participate in technology related professional development throughout the year. Professional learning classes are available and posted online for school system employees.

Appendices

a. Policies and Procedures	<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Houston County Schools</td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: right;">Board Policy</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Policy IFBG: Internet Acceptable Use</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2"> <p>The Houston County Board of Education recognizes the importance of making advanced technology and increased access to learning opportunities available to students and staff. The Houston County Board of Education believes that a “technology rich” classroom significantly enhances both the teaching and learning process. As resources permit, informational technology services shall be made available in schools.</p> <p>Houston County School System personnel shall take all available precautions to restrict access to controversial materials, while recognizing that it is impossible to control all material which might inadvertently be discovered by users on a global network.</p> <p><u>Purpose</u></p> <p>The purpose of informational technology is to facilitate communications in support of research and education by providing access to multiple resources. Use by any student or staff member must be in support of and consistent with the educational objectives of the Houston County School System. The State of Georgia has passed laws which govern the use of computers and related technology. The Georgia Computer Systems Protection Act specifically forbids computer misuse and abuse. The Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA) enacted by Congress in 2000 also provides guidance and regulations concerning students’ computer use and access to content over the internet.</p> <p><u>Authorized User</u></p> <p>An authorized user for the purpose of this policy will be defined as any employee, student, or guest of the Houston County School System who has been issued and assigned a log-in account. By using the computing resources of the Houston County Public Schools, the user agrees to abide by the guidelines and rules governing this.</p> </td> </tr> </table>	Houston County Schools	Board Policy	Policy IFBG: Internet Acceptable Use		<p>The Houston County Board of Education recognizes the importance of making advanced technology and increased access to learning opportunities available to students and staff. The Houston County Board of Education believes that a “technology rich” classroom significantly enhances both the teaching and learning process. As resources permit, informational technology services shall be made available in schools.</p> <p>Houston County School System personnel shall take all available precautions to restrict access to controversial materials, while recognizing that it is impossible to control all material which might inadvertently be discovered by users on a global network.</p> <p><u>Purpose</u></p> <p>The purpose of informational technology is to facilitate communications in support of research and education by providing access to multiple resources. Use by any student or staff member must be in support of and consistent with the educational objectives of the Houston County School System. The State of Georgia has passed laws which govern the use of computers and related technology. The Georgia Computer Systems Protection Act specifically forbids computer misuse and abuse. The Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA) enacted by Congress in 2000 also provides guidance and regulations concerning students’ computer use and access to content over the internet.</p> <p><u>Authorized User</u></p> <p>An authorized user for the purpose of this policy will be defined as any employee, student, or guest of the Houston County School System who has been issued and assigned a log-in account. By using the computing resources of the Houston County Public Schools, the user agrees to abide by the guidelines and rules governing this.</p>	
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Terms and Conditions

An individual's use of the computing resources of the Houston County Schools is not an absolute personal right; rather, it is a privilege, conditional on the individual's compliance with state and federal laws, the Houston County Schools' policies and regulations, school regulations, and satisfactory behavior involving technology. Inappropriate use, including any violation of these conditions and policies, may result in cancellation of the privilege. The Houston County School System has the authority to determine appropriate use and may discipline, deny, revoke, or suspend any user's access at any time based upon the determination of inappropriate use.

It is the intent of Houston County School System to adhere to the provisions of copyright laws as they relate to informational technology. Transmission of any material in violation of United States Law or state regulations is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, or material protected by patent.

Users are not allowed to purchase, download or load software without written permission from the HCBOE Technology Services Center or Director of Information Technology.

Use for commercial activities, product advertisement, or political lobbying is prohibited.

The use of all school and central office networks shall be for the exchange of information in order to promote and support educational excellence in the school system.

Encounter of Controversial Material

The Houston County School System has a right and will make every effort to control the content of data accessed through the Internet by the use of firewalls and filtering software and teacher monitoring.

Users may encounter material which is controversial. It is the user's responsibility not to initiate access to controversial material purposely. If such material is accessed accidentally, the student/teacher shall notify an adult teacher/supervisor immediately.

Vandalism and Harassment

1. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm, modify, or destroy data of a system or another user.

2. Harassment is defined as the persistent annoyance of another user or the interference in another user's work.

3. Vandalism and harassment will result in cancellation of user privileges.

GUIDELINES

Network Guidelines

1. Users will not post, publish, send or intentionally receive offensive messages or pictures from any source, including but not limited to any defamatory, inaccurate, abusive, obscene, profane, sexually oriented, threatening, racially offensive, sexist or illegal material. Access to materials "harmful to minors," as that term is defined in the Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000 shall be restricted.

2. Users will not transmit or download information or software in violation of copyright laws. Only resources for which the author has given expressed consent for on-line distribution can be used. All users should consider the source of any information they obtain as well as the validity of that information.

3. Posting messages and attributing them to another user is prohibited.

4. Downloading of non-instructional materials from the Internet is unacceptable.

5. Disclaimer:

The Houston County Board of Education makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for services through the Internet. It denies responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through Internet services. The school system shall not be responsible for any damages a user suffers, including loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, mis-deliveries, or service interruption. Use of information obtained via the Internet is at the user's own risk.

E-Mail Guidelines

1. All users are expected to abide by accepted rules of e-mail user etiquette. These rules include but are not limited to the following: be polite, never send or encourage others to send abusive messages, and use appropriate language. E-mails are not guaranteed to be private.

2. Mass distribution e-mails must be approved by a school administrator.

3. Opening and forwarding any e-mail attachments from unknown sources and/or that may contain viruses is prohibited.

4. No internet e-mail is allowed except for that provided by the Houston County BOE.

Social Networking

For the purpose of this policy, social networking shall be defined as any web-based program where students and faculty may engage in conversational exchange of information. These facilities shall include, but are not limited to, messaging, blogs, and wikis.

Social networking shall only be permitted to be accessed from within the Houston County Educational Network with the supervision/monitoring by a teacher or school administrator.
Authorized users may access the network via their personal user ID and not that of someone else.
Users should not share their personal user IDs with any other person.

School Responsibilities

Schools shall ensure that all faculty, staff and students are aware of the rights and responsibilities of acceptable informational technology use contained in Houston County BOE policies.

Student Responsibilities

1. Students will observe the standard of courtesy and behavior consistent with the practices and policies of the Houston County Board of Education when sending or publishing messages or transmitting data or other information on the Internet.
2. Students will access the network using their personal ID and not that of someone else. Students will not share their user IDs, passwords, user log-on accounts with others and must make all efforts to safeguard any information from unauthorized users.
3. Students may not attempt to access information for which they are not authorized.
4. Students will use informational technology for instructional purposes only as it relates to classroom and co-curricular assignments and activities. Students will not use the system for any purpose if it is in violation of the law.
5. Students must receive permission from a teacher or designated personnel prior to accessing the Internet or any other specific file or application.
6. Any student who identifies a security problem must notify an adult teacher, supervisor or administrator immediately.
7. Students may not have access to an employee's workstation under an employee ID and may be subject to disciplinary action if such attempt is made.
8. Students are violating network security if they enter the system under a user ID other than one that is assigned to them and may be subject to disciplinary action.
9. Students disconnecting network components are guilty of harming network integrity and/or security, and will be subject to disciplinary action.
10. Students are violating network security if they alter programs or data on any network file server or any system's hard disk, and will be subject to disciplinary action.
11. Students are violating network security and software copyright laws if they knowingly use illegal copies of software on any school computer, and will be subject to disciplinary action.
12. Students purposely infecting any HCBOE computer with a malicious code will be subject to disciplinary action.

ADOPTED: 2/13/96

REVISED: 5/28/02; 7/8/03; 6/10/08; 9/14/10; 4/9/2013

**Houston County Schools
Policy IFBGB: Web Pages**

Board Policy

The availability of Internet access in Houston County schools provides an opportunity for students and staff to contribute to the school system's presence on the World Wide Web. The system's Web sites provide information to the world about school curriculum, instruction, school-authorized activities, and other general information relating to Houston County schools and the system's mission. Internet access for the creation of Web pages is provided by system administrators and each building principal or the professional staff member designated by the principal. Creators of Web pages should familiarize themselves with and adhere to the system policies and procedures. Failure to follow these policies or procedures may result in the loss of authoring privileges or other more stringent disciplinary measures.

Other

Given the rapid change in technology, some of the technical standards outlined in this policy and the accompanying procedure may require change throughout the year. Such changes will be made by the system's network specialist with approval of the Superintendent. This Web Page Policy will be updated on an annual basis, or more frequently if required.

ADOPTED: 02/10/1998

**Houston County Schools
Policy IFBGE: Internet Safety**

Board Policy

The Houston County Board of Education endorses and fully supports the Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000, and instructs the Houston County School System's Technology Services Department to implement and maintain the following standards:

1. The Houston County School System shall employ Internet filtering technology, which will restrict access by minors to inappropriate materials on the Internet. The filtering solution is firmware based, employing the Sonic Wall Internet firewall, and using Cyber Patrol's "not list."
2. The Houston County School System will use appropriate measures, including Internet filtering solutions and network security devices, which will insure the safety of minors when using Internet mail, chat rooms, and other forms of communications.
3. The Houston County School System will use appropriate tracking methods to insure that minors do not participate in unauthorized or illegal measures while online.
4. The Houston County School System will employ adequate network firewall and server security measures as to insure against the unauthorized use or disclosure of personal information regarding students and faculty.
5. The Houston County School System shall employ Internet filtering and network firewall facilities, which will restrict access by minors to harmful matters.
6. The Houston County School System will educate students about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking website and in chat rooms and cyber bullying awareness and response.
7. The Houston County Board of Education conducted a public hearing located at the Middle Georgia Technical College in October, 2001. The purpose of this hearing was to allow public input specific to how the school system will comply with requirements of the Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000.
8. After our Internet safety policy is approved we will update our technology plan and notify the DOE.

ADOPTED: 11/8/05

REVISED: 06/27/2012

**Houston County Schools
Policy DJE: Purchasing**

Board Policy

The Director of Purchasing, hereinafter the "Director," shall direct and manage the purchasing, warehousing, supply distribution, and contracting activities of the District. The Director of Facilities shall conduct bids/requests for proposals and contracting activities for building construction, renovation and other facility operations.

The Director shall develop and submit for approval all system administrative regulations, rules and procedures for purchasing based on policy, law and standards of procurement.

This policy series applies to all employees, consultants, appointees and agents engaged in procurement activities for the District. All purchases, regardless of funding, for which the Houston County Board of Education or any of its schools is expected to make payment must comply with the rules, regulations and guidelines contained in the purchasing policy series.

Purchases from elected Board members or companies in which the Board member or member of the immediate family has a controlling interest are prohibited.

Purchases, except through sealed bid, from employees or companies in which the employee or a member of the immediate family has a controlling interest are prohibited. If the sealed bid of an employee is to be considered for a purchase, the employee must have no involvement in developing the specifications for the bid nor any involvement in the evaluation of the bid.

NOTE: For the purposes of this policy series, immediate family is defined as spouse, child, (natural or adopted), stepchild, mother, father, brother, sister, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law, or sister-in-law.

CROSS REFERENCE Policy DJEA - Purchasing Authority

ADOPTED: 09/08/1981

REVISED: 11/01/1986; 10/11/1994; 01/11/2005; 05/09/2006

Houston County Schools
Policy DJEA: Purchasing Authority

Board Policy

The Director of Purchasing shall be the chief purchasing agent and chief procurement officer of the Board. Under the approval process contained herein, the Director shall have the authority to purchase or contract to purchase and/or lease materials, supplies, equipment, services and all other items necessary to support the school District and educational programs. All purchases and/or contracts shall be awarded contingent upon an appropriation having been made, and upon the availability of funds. All purchases or contracts not provided for in one of the funds and all purchases or contracts that extend beyond a current fiscal year, or beyond the current calendar year, or involve the possibility of a penalty for cancellation or any other contingent expenditure in excess of the current appropriation will require prior approval of the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Business Operations or the Superintendent.

The Superintendent shall designate school based and department administrator level personnel who may approve purchases for their respective school, department and/or funds.

All purchases in excess of \$7,500.00 require approval of the appropriate Assistant Superintendent.

Employees may be reimbursed for small purchases made in good faith.

Purchases Requiring Board Approval

The following type purchases must be approved by the Board in an official meeting:

1. All purchases of capital equipment totaling in excess of \$100,000.00 regardless of budget approval/appropriation.

Purchases must not be divided into smaller units in order to circumvent this policy.

2. All purchases of cars, trucks, buses, tractors and large industrial type equipment.

3. All services contracts greater than \$25,000.00 and a series of services contracts to the same vendor when the aggregate

exceeds \$25,000.00 per fiscal year.

4. All contracts obligating the District beyond current fiscal and/or current calendar years.

Administrative Leeway

The Superintendent may waive the above-stated requirements when in his/her opinion, time is of the essence and delay would adversely impact the educational system. The Superintendent shall advise the Board when such waivers are made.

ADOPTED: 09/08/1981

REVISED: 11/01/1986; 10/11/1994; 01/11/2005; 05/09/2006

**Houston County Schools
Policy DJEB: Quality Control**

Board Policy

In the event goods or services furnished by the bidder under contract or purchase order should for any reason not conform to the specifications or to the sample submitted by the bidder with his/her bid, the Director of Purchasing may reject the goods or services. The Director shall issue specific instructions to the bidder to remove the goods without expense to the Board and to replace all rejected goods with goods conforming to the specifications and/or samples.

The Director shall investigate all claims of substandard goods and/or services. If validated, the Director, in conjunction with the principal/department administrator, may reject the same.

When the cost exceeds \$1,000.00, the director shall report all cases of rejected goods and or services to the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Business Operations.

Specifications

The Director shall develop and/or approve departmental generated specifications as needed to purchase goods and services.

For common items, commercially available brands and model numbers may be cited in lieu of or in conjunction with specifications.

Purchasing Guides and Vendor Lists

The Director will publish and maintain a "Purchasing Policy and Procedure Manual" as necessary which will be an addendum to this policy series. The manual will be approved by the Board attorney, the Superintendent, and the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Business Operations.

The Director will establish procedures for new vendors to be added to an approved vendor list.

Trial Tests and Field Checks

The Director is authorized to require chemical and physical tests of samples submitted with bids and samples of deliveries which are necessary to determine their conformance with specifications. In performance of tests, the Director may use any appropriate laboratory. All expenses for tests and inspections will be paid by the Board.

Although certain products may meet specifications, they may not offer the best value. In such cases, the Director may field test products by having a school or department use those products in the normal course of daily activity where and when the product would be used.

Products rated inferior by Board employees may be identified on the request for quotation, not considered, or rejected during current and/or future bids.

Inspections

A strong inspection program at the time of delivery is necessary to ensure the conformity, quality, quantity and timeliness standards of goods and services.

The Director will set standards and procedures and will exercise general supervision over the inspection of deliveries of all goods and services to determine their conformance to the specifications set forth in the bid/contract or purchase order.

ADOPTED: 10/11/1994

**Houston County Schools
Policy DJEC: Cost Control**

Board Policy

Each employee must make every effort to control costs while maintaining a quality level of goods and services suitable for the needs of the District. Cost control can be achieved through standardization of goods and services, quantity or bulk purchasing and cooperative purchasing.

Schools and departments must not purchase an item from a vendor when the same or like item is stocked in the central warehouse.

Quantity Purchasing

Cost control can be achieved through bulk purchasing. The Director of Purchasing will purchase and stock common and routinely used school and office products when such are consumed in large quantities or are needed at regular intervals.

Cooperative Purchasing

In keeping with a policy of cost containment, the Board will allow cooperative purchasing when it is in the best interest of the school District, and when allowing other agencies to purchase off a Board initiated purchase/contract does not increase the cost to the Board.

The Director may negotiate an agreement with any other government agency for the cooperative use of supplies, equipment or services under the terms agreed upon between or among the parties. All such agreements must be evidenced by a written agreement and approved by the Board.

The Director may use existing State and Federal contracts to make purchases when such contracts allow local participation and to do so is in the best interest of the Board and provides a cost savings to the system.

ADOPTED: 10/11/1994

REVISED: 01/11/2005; 05/09/2006

Equipment, Furniture and Vehicles

When feasible, items requiring recurring maintenance, supplies or follow-up service contracts shall be standardized. The items listed below shall be centrally procured by or under the direction of the Director of Purchasing in order to contain cost and standardize products.

1. All copy machines, duplicating equipment, multi-function machines and printers
2. All telephone systems and telephone equipment
3. All furniture of all types
4. All office equipment to include but not to be limited to typewriters, calculators, time-keeping equipment, etc.
5. All cars, trucks, buses, tractors, forklifts and industrial equipment.
6. All audio/visual equipment, to include projectors (overhead, LCD, other), VCRs, DVD recorders/players, etc.
7. physical education equipment
8. All desktop and laptop/notebook computer equipment

Computer Hardware

All purchases of computer hardware shall meet or exceed the Minimum Technology Standards and Specifications for Computer Hardware developed by the System Technology Committee. Hardware purchased that does not meet or exceed these Standards and Specifications will not be maintained by District personnel or with District funds. All hardware, software, and web based purchases, regardless of funding source, must be approved by the Director of Administrative Technology.

Desktop/Laptop/Notebook Computer Software

All purchases of desktop/laptop/notebook computer software to be used for administrative purposes shall meet the standards set forth by the System Technology Committee. Desktop computer software which does not meet these standards will not be supported by District personnel or District funds. All desktop computer software to be used for administrative purposes must be approved by the Director of Administrative Technology.

ADOPTED: 09/08/1981

REVISED: 10/11/1994; 01/13/1998; 05/12/1998; 09/08/1998; 05/09/2006

**Houston County Schools
Policy DJED: Bids and Quotations**

Board Policy

1. Purchases of all equipment, materials, supplies, services, rents and leases shall be based on sound business practices.

Written bids, request for proposals (RFP), oral phone quotations, facsimile quotations, email bids and quotes, State of Georgia contracts, General Services Administration Contracts, Georgia Department of Education Regional Educational Service Agency cooperative purchasing contracts, applicable bids by local Government Agencies, and other government cooperative purchasing programs on a local, State or Nationwide contract, shall be used to purchase goods and services as specified below. Requests for proposals may be used when the use of competitive sealed bidding is either not practicable or not advantageous to the school system. Generally, a Request for Proposal will only be used when the school system lacks expertise in formulating detailed specifications for the goods or service needed or when the service needed or the service being purchased does not lend itself to a set of specifications.

2. Term contracts for goods and services will be established when deemed necessary and practicable by the Director of Purchasing. When such contracts are not available and other federal, state, local government or agency contracts are not available or are not in the best interest of the Board, the following shall be used to determine bid requirements. (See Houston County Board of Education Policy GAG, Conflict of Interest.)

a. Purchase of goods and services with a list price cost of \$1,000.00 or less may be made non-competitively.

b. Purchases of goods and services with a list price cost of more than \$1,000.00 but less than \$7,500.00 require a verbal, facsimile, email or written quotation from two or more vendors.

c. Purchases of goods and services with a list price cost of \$7,500.00 but less than \$75,000.00 require a facsimile, email or written quotation from three or more vendors.

d. Purchases of goods and services with a list price cost of more than \$75,000.00 require sealed bids or sealed proposals. Such purchases shall be given sufficient advertisement to encourage broad participation from competitive sources. Verbal, facsimile, and email bids or proposals may not be used.

e. All RFP's shall be written regardless of dollar value, RFP's in excess of \$10,000.00 shall be sealed proposals.

f. Sole source products and services are exempt from bid and RFP requirements. See item #7.

3. The following items, regardless of amount, may be purchased without competitive bids (See Houston County Board of Education Policy GAG, Conflict of Interest):

a. Textbooks, films, slides, video tapes, newspapers, library books, reference materials, or other instructional media from the publisher, distributor or agent.

b. Tests and test scoring services from the publisher or licensed agent.

c. Agreements and renewal agreements for maintenance service from the original vendor or authorized agent of the installed equipment or products. When a renewal agreement cost increase exceeds five (5) percent of the current cost and the service can be competitively bid, the renewal must be bid.

d. Continuance of an existing purchase agreement, rent, lease or purchase order when such continuance is in the best interest of the District.

e. Additional purchases of the same or like equipment, material, supplies, services, rentals or leases previously bid may be made provided the additional order is at the same or lower price or does not exceed a 5% increase.

4. Soliciting bids and quotations.

a. All bidders shall be provided with the same information concerning the goods or services to be procured to include changes to the original solicitation. Each solicitation will include the Board terms and conditions of the purchase.

b. All solicitations in excess of \$50,000.00 will be advertised on the Houston County Board of Education Website.

c. All bidders shall be given the same deadline for response to solicitations. Bids submitted after the closing date and time will not be considered. Such bids shall be marked with the date and time received and filed with the bid folder.

5. Selecting and awarding bids and RFP's.

a. Bids will be awarded to the lowest responsible and responsive bidder. The term responsible means that the bidder has the capacity and capability to provide the goods and services requested. The term responsive means that the bidder has indicated in the bid that he/she will provide the goods or services as specified or alternate goods or services that will meet or exceed the bid requirements. In determining the lowest responsible and responsive bidder, the solicitor shall consider the following factors:

1) The ability, capacity and skill of the bidder to perform the contract or provide the services required.

2) The capability of the bidder to perform the contract or provide the service promptly, or within the time specified, without delay or interference.

3) The character, integrity, reputation, judgment, experience and efficiency of the bidder.

4) The quality of performance of previous contract or services.

5) The previous and existing compliance by the bidder with laws, policies, terms and conditions relating to the contract or services.

6) The sufficiency of the financial resources and ability of the bidder to perform the contract or provide the service.

7) The quality, availability and adaptability of the supplies or services required by the solicitation.

8) The number and scope of conditions attached to the bid by the bidder, if any.

9) The life cycle cost when the solicitation is for equipment with a life expectancy of three or more years.

b. Competitive proposals (RFP's) shall be selected using the following procedures:

1) The contents of all proposals shall not be disclosed to other than Board employees and/or authorized consultants involved in selecting the best proposal until after the contract is awarded.

2) A register of all vendors submitting proposals shall be made available for public inspection.

3) After the opening of proposals, discussions and negotiations may be conducted with the responsible and responsive offerors who submitted proposals determined to be susceptible of being selected for award. These discussions are for the purpose of clarification to assure full understanding of, and responsiveness to the RFP requirements and to negotiate the best possible position for the school system. Offerors shall be accorded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity for discussion and revision of proposals. Such revisions may be permitted after original submissions and prior to award for the purpose of obtaining best and final offers. In conducting discussions, there shall be no disclosure of any information derived from proposals submitted by competing offerors.

4) Award shall be made to the responsible offeror whose proposal is determined to be the most advantageous to the Board taking into consideration price and the evaluation factors set forth in the RFP. The contract file shall contain the basis on which the award is made.

c. Tie bids shall be determined by drawing lots or by coin toss in public with vendors present or disinterested personnel witnessing the drawing/coin toss.

6. If after a bid is opened, the low bidder claims he/she has made an appreciable error in the preparation of the bid, and can support such claim with evidence satisfactory to the Director, the bidder shall be permitted to withdraw the bid. The bidder shall be disqualified from again bidding on the same goods or services should additional bids be required.

7. Sole source products and services are those which are available from only one vendor. Such products and services are exempt from bid and RFP requirements. The purchase of sole source products and services must be justified. A letter of justification must be attached to the purchase order/requisition when forwarded to the Purchasing Department. In situations where "sole source" classification is debatable, the Director of Purchasing shall make the final determination.

8. Emergency purchases are those purchases which if not performed immediately would result in health/safety hazards to students and/or employees, and/or would result in additional damage, and/or would cause interruption of the instructional program or essential business operations of the school system. To avoid emergency purchases, principals and department heads shall ensure their staffs plans and execute purchase requirements in a timely manner. Emergency purchases are exempt from bid and RFP requirements.

ADOPTED: 09/08/1981

REVISED: 11/01/1986; 10/11/1994; 05/09/2006

Purchase Orders

1. Except as provided under emergency purchases, no purchase shall be made without a valid purchase order or an authorization for a Procurement Card purchase. Orders for goods and services shall not be placed with the vendor prior to a purchase order being issued by the Purchasing Department or the purchaser having authority to make a Procurement card purchase. The Director of Purchasing shall report unauthorized purchases to the Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Business Operations. The Purchasing Department shall forward all purchase orders to the vendor by mail, facsimile, or other electronic means.
2. The Director will prescribe the form and procedures for processing purchase orders.
3. When an emergency exists and the Purchasing Department is closed or not available, an emergency purchase order may be issued by the highest level of supervision available within the requesting department. The supervisor issuing the emergency purchase order shall provide the Purchasing Department with all information concerning the purchase no later than the next regular work day.
4. Procurement cards may be used to expedite the receipt of goods and services and reduce the administrative cost of procurement. The issuance and use of procurement cards shall be controlled by a card administrator. The Superintendent or appropriate Assistant Superintendent must authorize the card administrator to issue cards. Each card and card holder shall have spending and usage limits for their card. Card holders shall sign an agreement with the School District that they are responsible for proper use of the procurement card. The Principal or Department Head shall sign for and control any cards issued in the name of the school or department. The Superintendent may authorize other credit cards (Visa, MasterCard, American Express, etc.) as necessary to manage the business operations of the District.
5. Misuse of procurement cards and other credit cards shall be reported to the Superintendent. Upon confirmation of misuse of a Procurement Card, the Superintendent shall revoke all purchasing authority from the card holder to include use of purchase orders. The Superintendent shall take administrative action up to and including termination of any employee misusing a procurement or credit card.
6. The Director will prescribe the procedures for procurement card use, and publish a manual for card users. The Procurement Card Manual shall be presented to the Board for approval as policy.

Encumbrance of Funds

Except for emergency purchases, prior to approving the purchase, the department approval authority shall ensure that a sufficient unencumbered balance in excess of all unpaid obligations remains in the account to be charged.

Contracts

1. The Superintendent may approve a contract for goods and services. Such contracts may require review by legal counsel, the Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Business Operations and Director of Purchasing.
2. Cost plus a percentage of cost and cost reimbursement contracts are not authorized.
3. Multi-year purchase, multi-year lease-purchase, and other types of contracts for goods and services that are in the best interest of the Board may be used by Departments and Principals. Such contracts shall be in accordance with and contain the requirements of O.C.G.A 20-2-506. Such contracts shall be forwarded to the Director of Purchasing as in CONTRACTS, paragraph 1 above.

c. The contract shall terminate absolutely at such time as appropriation for such contract is no longer available to satisfy the obligation of the Board. Determination of such appropriation shall be made by the Board.

d. The Contractor shall certify its compliance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA), D.L. 99-603 and the Georgia Security and Immigration Compliance Act OCGA 13-10-90 et seq.

4. The Director shall prescribe the form and procedures for goods and services contract. Contracts for goods and services shall be filed in the Purchasing Department or user department. The department head from the using department shall appoint a contract monitor for each contract. The contract monitor shall be certified, professional/technical or supervisory personnel.

5. All contracts for goods and services are to be in accordance with the laws of the State of Georgia.

6. The Superintendent and/or Chairman of the Board of Education shall be signatory to all contracts obligating the District for more than one fiscal or calendar year. In the absence of the Superintendent, the Assistant Superintendent for School Operations may act as signatory. No other employee may obligate the District for multiple fiscal or calendar years, regardless of funding source.

Change Orders

Changes to purchase orders shall be processed in the same manner as purchase orders. The Director shall prescribe the form and procedures for change orders.

ADOPTED: 10/11/1994

REVISED: 01/11/2005; 05/09/2006; 02/12/2008

**Houston County Schools
Policy DJEI: Vendor Relations**

Board Policy

The Director of Purchasing will prepare a vendor bulletin informing vendors of the policies and procedures for becoming a registered vendor and for conducting business with the Board. This publication will be posted on the Houston County Board of Education website.

The Director will establish and maintain a list of approved vendors for use by system personnel.

The Board encourages the Director and system administrators to make frequent contact with vendors to develop good business relationships and keep abreast of new products and services.

All employees involved in the purchasing of goods and services shall promote competition and equal opportunity in all procurement activities. Favoritism shall not be extended to any vendor except as provided for within this policy series. Board personnel must avoid any impropriety or appearance of any impropriety in conducting procurement activities.

No employee shall make personal gain from conducting business with a vendor. No employee shall directly or indirectly solicit any gift or accept or receive any gifts, whether in the form of money, services, loan, travel, entertainment, hospitality, thing or promise, or any other form, under circumstances and of such value that it could reasonably be inferred that the gift was intended to influence such employee in the performance of official duties.

Gifts and/or offers which violate this policy or which the employee reasonably suspects may violate this policy must be reported to the Director, Assistant Superintendent for Business and Operations or Superintendent. The acceptance of a gift, gain or gratuity which violates this policy shall be subject to administrative action up to and including termination.

Sales Calls and Demonstrations

The Board encourages the Director and administrators to entertain sales calls from and demonstrations by established vendors for the purpose of maintaining good vendor relations and testing products in the operational environment. Such sales calls and demonstrations should not interfere with nor detract from the instructional process, nor should they imply any obligation to purchase.

ADOPTED: 09/08/1981

REVISED: 11/01/1986; 10/11/1994; 05/09/2006

Houston County Schools
Policy DJEJ: Payment Procedures

Board Policy

Bill Payment Authorization

The Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Business Operations will prescribe procedures for payment of invoices and will authorize payment for goods and services when:

1. Purchased in accordance with Board purchasing policies, regulations and procedures; and
2. Certified by the receiving agent as having been conformed to the purchase order as to quantity and quality.

Invoices

Invoices submitted for payment must be originals. When original invoices are not available, a written explanation for the facsimile must be attached.

Payment will not be made from vendor statements.

ADOPTED: 09/08/1981

REVISED: 11/01/1986; 10/11/1994; 01/11/2005

