

(3) A COUNTY BOARD'S PARTICIPATION IN CONTRACTS FOR GOODS OR COMMODITIES THAT ARE AWARDED BY OTHER PUBLIC AGENCIES OR BY INTERGOVERNMENTAL PURCHASING ORGANIZATIONS IF THE LEAD AGENCY FOR THE CONTRACT FOLLOWS PUBLIC BIDDING PROCEDURES.

(b) (1) If the cost of any school building, improvement, supplies, or equipment is more than \$15,000, the county board, at least 2 weeks before bids are to be filed, shall advertise for bids in [at least one newspaper of general circulation in the county] A MEDIUM ACCESSIBLE TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC, WHICH INCLUDES:

- (I) A NEWSPAPER OF GENERAL CIRCULATION IN THE REGION;
- (II) THE MARYLAND CONTRACT WEEKLY OR COMPARABLE STATE PUBLICATION; OR
- (III) AN ELECTRONIC POSTING ON A BID BOARD AND PHYSICAL POSTING ON THE LOCAL SCHOOL SYSTEM BID BOARD.

(2) (i) The county board shall draft specifications that provide a clear and accurate description of the functional characteristics or the nature of an item to be procured, without modifying the county board's requirements.

(ii) The specifications may:

- 1. Include a statement of any of the county board's requirements; and
- 2. Provide for the submission of samples, inspection, or testing of the item before procurement.

(3) (i) Except as provided in subparagraph (ii) of this subsection, specifications that use one or more manufacturer's product to describe the standard of quality, performance, or other characteristics needed to meet the county board's requirements, must allow for the submission of equivalent products.

(ii) Subparagraph (i) of this paragraph does not apply if the county board determines in the written specification that:

- 1. A particular manufacturer's product is required to maintain compatibility of service or equipment;
- 2. A particular manufacturer's product is required to meet the health needs of students;
- 3. Replacement parts or maintenance are a paramount consideration; or
- 4. A product is purchased for resale.

(c) (1) A contract for the school building, improvements, supplies, or other equipment shall be awarded to the lowest responsible bidder who conforms to specifications with consideration given to:

(i) The quantities involved;