

MSFBG ACCEPTANCE PROCEDURES

Revised 12-03-08

Definitions:

“Acceptance” is meeting the criteria required to be awarded a bid. The criteria consist of nutritional properties, and quality properties such as color, taste, texture.

Nutritional properties are considered acceptable if the item bid is considered to be equal to, or better than, the product specification of the approved item or the specifications listed on the bid document. The ultimate determination will be made by the MSFBG Voting Members.

Quality is considered acceptable if an item satisfies appearance attributes and student demand from a taste and consumption standpoint. For example, in a testing or sampling situation, if the students like an item, then it is considered to be of acceptable quality. Conversely, if an item is disliked by the students, it is considered to not meet the quality criteria. The ultimate determination will be made by the MSFBG Voting Members.

Process:

Prior to bid being released

During the development of the bid, items are listed either by brand name (including manufacturer number) or product content specifications (in addition to content, specifications can also refer to rebate ability).

When using brand names, the brand is considered acceptable and therefore approved if the group reaches consensus based on past experience. More than one brand can be agreed upon by the group as approved for a given bid item.

During the bid development, any district can opt out of the bid for any item. The district “opting out” does not include their usage volume in the bid and they are not responsible for using that item in the next school year.

Those districts opting in to the bid agree to use whichever product is awarded the bid in the next school year. Usage volume is gathered from those districts opting in to the bid and this volume is what is shown on the bid document. Before the bid is released, each district will be given the opportunity to verify that the quantities being used in the bid, were in fact, the quantities submitted by the district. In the event the numbers are incorrect, the numbers will be changed on the bid.

Analysis of Bids

Cost is analyzed on a per each, per serving or other basis (different pack sizes are taken into account). If the pack sizes are different enough to result in additional fixed fee mark-ups per case, that will also be taken into account in the analysis.

Conversely, excessive weight pack sizes may be disqualified as too heavy to be practical.

If the lowest bid is an item brand shown on the bid document as approved, the bid will be awarded to that item.

If the lowest bid is an item brand that is not shown on the bid as an approved brand or if the item has product specifications and not a brand name shown on the bid document, the process for analysis will be exactly the same. Those items will be given to the evaluation team with the nutritional information from the vendor's bid.

Evaluation of Bids

First, the nutritional properties of the lowest bid item will be compared to the approved item. If the item does not meet or beat the nutritional properties of the approved item, the lowest bid item will be rejected and the next lowest bid item will be considered.

After the item has been found to meet the nutritional criteria of the approved item on the bid, it will then be evaluated for quality. The evaluation for quality begins by teams from the MSFBG Voting Members evaluating the item for appearance, texture, and preparation. After the evaluation team deems the item acceptable, they will either do a taste test among themselves or select a school for students to evaluate taste.

Taste evaluations are conducted in a "blind" format and done one item at a time. The lowest bid item is evaluated first. If it is considered acceptable by the team, no more items are taste evaluated. If the lowest bid item is taste rejected, the second lowest bid item is then taste evaluated. This process is continued until an item is considered acceptable. At no time are items considered on a "side by side comparison" basis.

The items evaluated successfully will be sent to the Anoka-Hennepin School Board for approval to award the bid. The award calendar is based on criteria such as state mandates for commodity and rebate selections, manufacturer time frames for issuing future year school bids, school board meeting schedules and the end of current school year.

Exceptions

After Bid Award but prior to July 1

In the event that a district has a need (i.e. based on anticipated menu changes) to change from the awarded product, the district may contact the manufacturer directly to see if an alternative product is available to meet the districts needs. The alternative product will have the same volume commitments from the district as the original product. The district is then responsible for working with the distributor to bring in the alternative product.

In the event that the district is unable to use an alternative product or get the new product into the distributor, the district will agree to use the original product for the bid year.

The only exception to this would be a Federal or State mandate occurring after the bid was awarded.

After Bid Award and after August 1st

All awarded products will be considered acceptable.

Exceptions: If a product is changed by a manufacturer at any time after the bid submission and it then does not meet either the nutritional or quality criteria of the original product bid.

If a district has issues during the following school year with acceptance issues, the manufacturer will be contacted to see if the product is performing properly and to review preparation techniques. This process is to be documented by the district.

In the event that the issues cannot be resolved, the district may speak with the manufacturer to see if an alternative product is available to meet the districts needs. The alternative product will have the same volume commitments from the district as the original product. The district is then responsible for working with the distributor to bring in the alternative product.

In the event that the district is unable to use an alternative product or get a new product into the distributor, the only other option is to petition the MSFBG and request a variance to change products. The MSFBG will only consider the petition if volume commitments for the group as a whole are on course to be met for the school year. If volume commitments will be achieved excluding the petitioning district, the MSFBG will vote on the issue. In the event the variance is granted, the district requesting the change may only do so after January 1st of the current school year.