

**REPORT/RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
OF SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY
AND RECORD OF ACTION**

June 10, 2025

FROM

ARLENE MOLINA, Director, Preschool Services Department

SUBJECT

Non-Competitive Purchase of Education Materials and Equipment for Head Start and Early Head Start Classrooms

RECOMMENDATION(S)

Authorize the Purchasing Agent to issue non-competitive Purchase Orders for:

1. Education supplies and furniture with the following vendors:
 - a. Community Playthings for an amount not-to-exceed \$600,000.
 - b. Flexhibit for an amount not-to-exceed \$6,000,000.
 - c. Kaplan for an amount not-to-exceed \$1,000,000.
2. Security enhancements including equipment, lighting, and other security related equipment and/or products with Siemens, for an amount not-to-exceed \$2,000,000.
3. Computer and software system enhancements with the following vendors for a not-to-exceed aggregate amount of \$1,300,000:
 - a. Unitek
 - b. Sehi Computer Products Inc.
4. Refrigerators, freezers, and other food service-related items with The Dish Factory, Inc. for an amount not-to-exceed \$250,000.
5. Two Cargo Vans, for an amount not-to-exceed \$200,000, that will be equipped with literacy materials and outdoor and athletic materials for programming at various sites throughout the county, including the new Child Development Center.

(Presenter: Arlene Molina, Director, 383-2078)

COUNTY AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Operate in a Fiscally-Responsible and Business-Like Manner.

Provide for the Safety, Health and Social Service Needs of County Residents.

Pursue County Goals and Objectives by Working with Other Agencies and Stakeholders.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

This item does not impact Discretionary General Funding (Net County Cost). The purchase cost of no more than \$11,350,000 for the Preschool Services Department (PSD) is 100% funded by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. Adequate appropriation and revenue have been included in the PSD 2024-25 budget.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

PSD operates the Federally funded Head Start and Early Head Start programs in locations throughout the County. Since 1999, PSD has operated these programs through a combination of direct and contracted services. The programs provide education, health, cognitive,

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social/emotional, physical growth and development, and parent-involvement services for children ages 0 to 5 years with the overall goal of increasing the school readiness of young children in economically disadvantaged families.

PSD engages in a system of continuous quality improvement that includes assessment of classroom environments to ensure the highest quality programs are provided to our community. The purchase of educational materials and equipment will address the need to enhance efficacy and diversity of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) programming. While there has been an influx of STEM products for school-aged children, there are still few companies that provide these products for children 18 months to 5 years of age, due to the safety considerations for this group such as component size, material, and complexity of equipment. Flexhibit is a leading provider of STEM materials proposed for ordering. Community Playthings is a provider of high quality outdoor play materials. These materials, along with supplemental athletic equipment will provide children with varied opportunities to engage in individual and group physical activities. PSD will also purchase two Cargo vans that will be equipped with literacy materials and outdoor and athletic materials, which will allow PSD to provide comprehensive STEM, literacy, and athletics programming in response to internal quality improvement goals and recent research that has identified that children with strong multi-faceted preschool experiences achieve higher incidence of school readiness and better long term academic outcomes.

To ensure the safety and security of children and staff, PSD will also purchase security equipment/lighting at various sites throughout the County. The purchase of this equipment will enable real-time monitoring, improve emergency response, and ensure secure access control. These measures create a safer, more secure environment that supports learning and community trust.

PROCUREMENT

PSD is proposing to move forward with a non-competitive purchase with Community Playthings, Kaplan, Flexhibit, and Siemens partially due to time constraints associated with the spending of these funds. If funds are not obligated by June 30, 2025, they may remain unspent and subject to return to the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. Additionally, Flexhibit and Community Playthings manufacture products using proprietary technology. Flexhibit is the primary maker of STEM exhibits targeted at children within the target age group with, all items and configurations are unique to this vendor.

Community Playthings is the only vendor using a wood treatment process that allows their products to withstand the outdoor conditions of all facilities located across the county, including both mountain and desert regions that often have extreme temperature shifts. Kaplan is the only vendor of home-living furniture and textiles, that allows the creation of home like spaces with the ability to support sensory integration for children needing social and emotional support. Currently, PSD has an existing contract with Siemens to provide video surveillance in 21 of our sites across the county. Due to recent security related incidents at several PSD sites, a need has been identified to secure our sites for the safety of staff, children, and families. By leveraging the current contract with Siemens, they can provide more in-depth security assessments and services.

Unitek and Sehi are approved County vendors who provided the lowest bids for computer and software enhancements needed. The Dish Factory is one of several bids received from vendors who provide commercial refrigerators and freezers to maintain appropriate food temperatures.

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The Dish Factory was selected as their bid was one of the lowest and they provide local delivery and set up. The two cargo vans selected from County approved vendor list will meet departmental needs of providing mobile literacy and athletic materials to sites throughout the County.

County Policy 11-04, Procurement of Goods and Supplies, Equipment and Services requires departments to seek Board approval for non-competitive purchases of goods in excess of \$200,000 annually.

REVIEW BY OTHERS

This item has been reviewed by Purchasing (Ariel Gill, Supervising Buyer, 387-2070) on June 3, 2025; County Counsel (Adam Ebright, Deputy County Counsel, 387-5455) on May 23, 2025; Finance (Allegra Pajot, Administrative Analyst, 388-0218) on May 23, 2025; and County Finance and Administration (Cheryl Adams, Deputy Executive Officer, 388-0332) on May 27, 2025.

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Record of Action of the Board of Supervisors
San Bernardino County

APPROVED (CONSENT CALENDAR)

Moved: Joe Baca, Jr. Seconded: Curt Hagman
Ayes: Col. Paul Cook (Ret.), Jesse Armendarez, Dawn Rowe, Curt Hagman, Joe Baca, Jr.

Lynna Monell, CLERK OF THE BOARD

BY 
DATED: June 10, 2025



cc: File - Preschool Services Department
JM 06/17/2025