



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF
EDUCATION

School Nutrition Programs Solicitation Templates: Instructions for Use

To support School Food Authorities (SFAs) in the District of Columbia with procurement for child nutrition programs, the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) school nutrition programs (SNP) team has developed solicitation templates and associated documents for food services, food and non-food items. SFAs must comply with both federal and state purchasing regulations when using National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and associated child nutrition program funds.

These templates are intended to help SFAs maintain compliance throughout the procurement process, ensure purchasing is competitive and transparent, and assist SFAs in receiving the best products, at the best possible prices.

SFAs may use OSSE’s templates, create their own, or use a combination. **If not using OSSE’s templates, solicitations must include all child nutrition program requirements. This will vary for each SFA and program.**

OSSE encourages customization of the solicitation documents to suit each SFAs child nutrition program needs. Word documents of the templates are available [on the OSSE website](#). Instructions on how to use the templates are included below.

1. Determine needs for child nutrition programs and identify which template solicitation document to use, if using an OSSE provided template.

Type and Description	Best to use when
Invitation for Bid (IFB): the document used in soliciting bids through the formal advertising method of procurement. IFBs are awarded to the responsive and responsible bidder with the lowest price .	Quality does not vary significantly . <i>Example: kitchen equipment.</i>
Request for Proposal (RFP): the document used in soliciting bids through the formal advertising method of procurement. RFPs are awarded to the responsive and responsible bidder whose offer is most advantageous to the SFA based upon evaluation criteria specified .	Quality may vary significantly . <i>Example: meals.</i>

Templates currently available include:

Solicitation Templates
Food Service Management Company (FSMC) RFP
Vended Meals RFP
Vended Meals IFB

Food Items RFP
Food Items IFB
Non-food Items RFP
Non-food items IFB

2. Make a copy of the desired template and customize as follows:

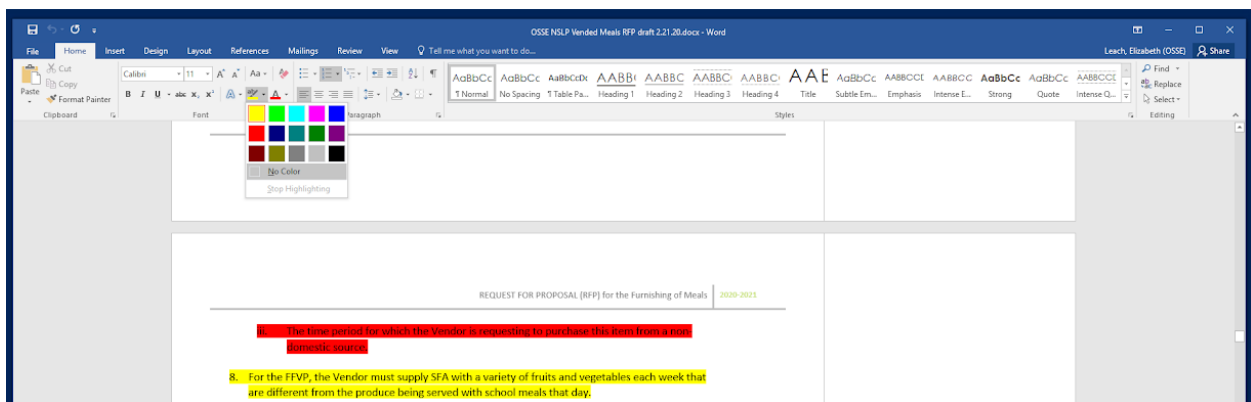
- a. Text in **blue** must be completed by the SFA
- b. Text highlighted in **RED** relate to federal or local regulations and cannot be changed
- c. Text highlighted in **YELLOW** are OSSE recommendations and may be changed as long as the changes do not cause the program to be out of compliance
- d. Text highlighted in **GREEN** are areas where SFAs have requested flexibility to which OSSE has provided alternative language that can be used. Reference the final appendix in each template for alternate language. Replace green language with alternate language to fit programmatic needs. Examples include:
 - i. Buying off-bid
 - ii. Adding additional sites or grades served
 - iii. Awarding multiple contracts
- e. Text that is not highlighted may be left as is, or changed to meet the specific needs of the SFA

3. Specifically, OSSE recommends personalizing the following sections:

- a. Scope: Include a values statement specific to your SFA and child nutrition programs.
- b. Technical Rating Scale (RFPs only): Adjust the rating scale to reflect programmatic values. Note that price must remain the largest factor. OSSE recommends not altering pricing.

4. Once personalization is complete and saved, remove highlighting and alternative language from throughout the document.

- a. → Select all (Control A) → Highlighter dropdown → No color



- b. Remove last appendix titled “Options for SFAs to choose from (Delete this page when finished)”. Delete the entire section.

5. Save and proceed with the procurement process.