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2009: SB29

MEMORANDUM TO: Directors of Education
Superintendents of Business and Finance
Secretary-Treasurer of School Authorities

FROM: Cheri Hayward
Director
School Business Support Branch

DATE: July 15, 2009

SUBJECT: Ontario Education Collaborative Marketplace (OECM) and
Strategic Sourcing Opportunities for Ontario School Boards

I am writing to provide you with updates regarding strategic sourcing opportunities in the sector being coordinated by the Ontario Education Collaborative Marketplace (OECM). As announced in the 2009 Ontario budget, the government would propose legislation that would require the majority of BPS entities, including school boards to collaborate when buying common goods and services.

The Ontario Education Collaborative Marketplace (OECM) was established by the education sector and funded by the Ministry of Finance through the OntarioBuys program to facilitate and lead strategic sourcing, group purchasing and introduce an integrated electronic marketplace. Strategic sourcing generates savings by applying an organized and systematic approach to group purchasing, product specification, Request for Proposal (RFP) preparation and evaluation, supplier negotiations, supplier management, and demand management. It brings people together to share knowledge and consolidate purchasing.

In 2009, OECM initiated strategic sourcing plans and issued Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for various commodities such as natural gas, photocopiers, office supplies and copy paper. OECM is also planning to issue additional RFPs for lab equipment/supplies, office furniture/furnishings, classroom furniture/ furnishings, cellular phones, janitorial supplies, electricity, and energy audits in 2009. Contracts are scalable and boards can participate as contracts with their existing suppliers expire. OECM plans to undertake strategic sourcing activities for textbooks, computer hardware, uniforms/clothing, courier/mail, computer peripherals, food supplies, telecom services and distributed software in 2010. In terms of the electronic marketplace, OECM will continue the testing of the pilot e-procurement model office for the sector, which is targeted to go "live" in 2009. The electronic marketplace will be a complete procurement solution that allows the buyer to shop from catalogues and create a requisition.

The Ministry of Education remains committed to the OECM project and continues to provide active oversight through its membership to the OECM board and by providing staff/sector resources and corporate support. To enhance communications strategies to boards, the ministry is currently working to redesign its OECM webpage to provide timely information to the sector

about upcoming strategic sourcing activities and events. The OECM webpage can be found on the School Business Support Branch (SBSB) website at <https://sbsb.edu.gov.on.ca>.

The ministry capitalizes on partnership opportunities with OECM in ensuring increased strategic sourcing opportunities in the sector, improved process management and tools, and enhanced sector capacity through the implementation of innovative supply-chain principles for boards. We would like to encourage you to participate in group sourcing initiatives for the commodities and services listed above, and to explore further opportunities for collaboration, including relevant categories of interests for school boards and the implementation of the eMarketplace.

Thank you for your continued support for strategic sourcing opportunities and activities coordinated by the OECM and for working with us on this important initiative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cheri Hayward". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Cheri Hayward
Director
School Business Support Branch

Cc: OASBO Purchasing Committee
Purchasing Managers
Procurement/ Purchasing Staff