



Caldwell County Schools

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Request for Proposals Uniform Rental and Full Garment Services March 14, 2025

The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to obtain pricing for and selection of a vendor to provide uniform rental and full garment service for the Caldwell County Board of Education (Board). The vendor shall provide the Board with the specified services based on a weekly rate per participating employee and site.

The Board is requesting proposals for uniform rental and full garment service for a 36-month term, with the possibility of two one-year extensions (for a total of five years). The awarded vendor shall provide rental uniforms and full garment service for the Board's Maintenance and Transportation Departments during the term of the contract, at the same rate and within the same term as the original contract. The contract between the Board and the selected vendor will provide uniforms and garment service for approximately 35 employees. The Board reserves the right to remove from or add to the roster of employees serviced under the contract with the selected vendor.

The contract will be awarded to the vendor deemed to have submitted the best overall proposal on the basis of the factors included in the RFP and Addendums. The Board may cancel the RFP and/or reject all proposals at any time prior to an award and is not required to furnish a statement of the reason why a particular proposal was not deemed to be the most advantageous. The award document will be a contract incorporating the requirements, items, and conditions of the RFP.

PROCUREMENT PROCESS

A. Solicitation Schedule: The Board expects to undertake the solicitation process according to the following schedule:

- Release of RFP - Friday, March 14, 2025
- Deadline for questions - Friday, March 21, 2025
- Deadline for Board's advertised response to bidders - Friday, March 28, 2025
- RFP due date - 4:00 pm, Friday, April 4, 2025

B. Interpretations and Clarifications: Questions or clarification of this RFP must be made in writing and addressed to Andy Puhl at the e-mail address listed below. No questions will be received by telephone. Please reference the RFP page and topic. The deadline for questions/clarifications is no later than Friday, March 21, 2025.

Andy Puhl
Assistant Superintendent/Auxiliary Services
Caldwell County Schools
1914 Hickory Blvd. SW
Lenoir, NC 28645
Phone: 828-728-8407 ext. 140128
Email: apuhl@caldwellschools.com

The Board will address all questions submitted by potential respondents via an addendum posted to the Board's website no later than Friday, March 28, 2025.

C. Submission of RFP: RFP submittals may be emailed, mailed, or hand-delivered. Submittals must be received by **Friday, April 4, 2025 at 4:00 p.m.**
to:

Andy Puhl
Assistant Superintendent/Auxiliary Services
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- Proposals should be clearly marked "**RFP for Caldwell County Schools Uniform Rental and Full Garment Services**". It is the vendors' responsibility to ensure the proposal is submitted on or before the day and time above. The Board is not responsible for late proposals due to postal delivery, mishaps, or acts of God. Any proposals received later than the above designated date and time shall be deemed non-responsive and will not be considered.
- When received, all proposals and supporting materials, as well as correspondence relating to the RFP, shall become the property of the Board.
- As allowed under NCGS 143.129.8, proposals will not be made available to inspect

or view until the contract has been awarded.

- In submitting a proposal, it is understood by the vendor that the Board reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to waive any irregularities or informalities in proposals when to do so is in the best interest of the Board.
- Any proposal may be withdrawn or modified by written request of the vendor, provided such request is received by the Board at the designated address **prior** to the date and time set for receipt of proposals. If a proposal includes any propriety data or information, such data or information must be specifically identified as such **on every page** on which it is found. Data or information so identified will remain confidential to the extent allowed by North Carolina law pursuant to GS 132-1.2 and will be used by the Board personnel solely for the purposes of evaluating proposals and conducting contract negotiations.
- All proposing firms or individuals shall comply with all conditions, requirements, and specifications contained herein, with any departure constituting sufficient cause for rejection of the proposal. However, the Board reserves the right to change the conditions, requirements and specifications as it deems necessary.
- No proposals will be accepted from any person or organization that is in arrears for any obligation to the Board, or that otherwise may be deemed irresponsible or unresponsive by Board staff.
- All prices quoted must be firm for a period of one hundred twenty (120) days following the proposal deadline.
- The cost of preparing a response to the RFP will not be reimbursed by the Board.
- No agreements with any selected vendor shall be binding until a contract is signed and executed by the Board and authorized representatives of the vendor.

SELECTION PROCESS

D. Purpose: The purpose of this RFP is to secure a supplier of uniform rental and full garment services provided for the Caldwell County Board of Education.

The Board will review all received proposals and select a single vendor to provide the services sought within the content of this RFP. Pursuant to G.S. 143-129.8, the Board will award a contract to the vendor that submits the best overall proposal, as determined by the Board. Negotiations may be undertaken with the vendor whose proposal is the best overall and whose understanding, qualifications, experience, and financial terms show them to be most qualified, responsible, and capable of providing these services.

The contract awarded as a result of this RFP will be selected based on the most advantageous to the Board and that best meets the needs of the Board. The contract will not necessarily be awarded to the respondent with the lowest overall cost

proposal.

The Board reserves the right to reject all proposals if and when necessary.

E. Selection Criteria: All proposals will be screened by an evaluation committee. The evaluation committee shall screen and rate all of the responses that are submitted. Evaluation ratings will be on a 100-point scale, and those proposers selected for a short list may be invited to attend an interview, at the proposer's own expense. Any invitation for an oral presentation will be solely for the purpose of clarifying proposals received from each qualifying proposer, and will not represent any decision on the part of the evaluation committee as to the selection of a successful proposer. The Board will evaluate all proposals based on the following criteria:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| 1. Cost of Services | 40% |
| 2. Qualifications & Experience | 20% |
| 3. References | 20% |
| 4. Responsiveness of Proposal | 20% |

Once proposals are scored, the evaluation team will select finalists and decide if interviews will be conducted.

Should negotiations be unsuccessful, the Board shall enter into negotiations with the next, highest ranked Vendor. The process shall continue until an agreement is reached with a qualified Vendor.

This RFP does not commit the Board to pay for any direct and/or indirect costs incurred in the preparation and presentation of a response. All finalist(s) shall pay their own costs incurred in preparing for, traveling to and attending interviews.

The Board reserves the right to negotiate the final fee prior to recommending any Vendor for a contract.

The Board reserves the right to use all pertinent information (also learned from sources other than disclosed in the RFP process) that might affect the Board's judgment as to the appropriateness of an award to the best evaluated proposer. This information may be appended to the proposal evaluation process results.

Following the criteria listed in G.S. 143-129.8 and 143-135.9, the Board will make a final selection based on the evaluation committee's recommendation and other factors the Board deems to be in its best interest.

Specifications for Uniform Rental

Caldwell County's School Maintenance and Transportation Departments are seeking a contract for the purpose of renting uniforms for its staff.

I. Contract

A. Initial Contract

This agreement shall commence on the _____ day of _____, 2025 and shall end on June 30, 2028, unless terminated sooner as provided in this document.

B. Contract Extension

The Board of Education reserves the right to extend the contract on a one-year basis, for two (2) additional years, if it is determined to be in its best interests.

1. The life of the contract, including all extensions, shall not exceed a period of five (5) years.
2. The Board of Education may consider a rate increase, if it can be sufficiently justified by the contractor no later than 60 calendar days prior to the anniversary date of the contract.

C. Termination

The Board of Education reserves the right to terminate the contract during the initial term, or any extension thereof, for deficiencies in service and/or quality of garments or other merchandise supplied by the contractor.

II. Scope of Work

The successful Contractor will furnish the Board of Education with new garments and other merchandise as described, freshly processed, and finished in accordance with the generally accepted standards of the textile rental industry.

III. Pick-up & Delivery

A. Frequency

Successful Contractor agrees to provide garment and other merchandise servicing on a **weekly** basis, with the understanding that laundered items are delivered the **same day** that the soiled items are picked up.

B. Times

Days and times available for deliveries are Monday – Friday between the hours of 7:30 AM - 3:00 PM. The Board of Education will coordinate with the successful Contractor to establish a **definite day and time frame** prior to the commencement of the contract.

1. If the contractor fails to deliver all of the required uniforms on the regular delivery day, they will make a special delivery of any missing uniforms no later than the afternoon of the day following the regularly scheduled delivery day.
2. The contractor must coordinate with the Maintenance and Transportation departments to make other arrangements for delivery of uniforms if the delivery day coincides with a Board of Education holiday.

C. Locations

The contractor will deliver to multiple locations as identified below:

Maintenance Department and Transportation Department

D. Miscellaneous

The contractor will be responsible for the pick-up of excess wire hangers for recycling.

IV. Uniforms

The contractor shall furnish **new** uniforms for the initial setup and outfitting of Board of Education employees. In all instances, “like new” uniforms are **not acceptable**.

A. Seasonal Options

1. The contractor will provide a seasonal change option of shirt sleeve length as well as the option of having some shirts of both sleeve lengths.
2. The contractor will provide a pant length, as well as the **lease option** of having shorts, for seasonal change. The lease option will include cleaning of the shorts weekly.

B. Embroidery / Patchwork

The contractor will be responsible for providing the Board of Education logo and the department name on all uniforms (shirts, coveralls and jackets). **Silk screening is not acceptable**. The Board of Education logo and department name shall be over the heart and the employee’s name shall be on the opposite side of the chest.

1. The Board of Education is requesting pricing on the bid form for two options: patches and embroidery. The Board of Education will indicate which methodology it prefers at the time of the initial order.
2. A one-time fee for the set-up of the artwork will be allowed and should be indicated on the bid form. The application of the Board of Education logo, as may be required throughout the contract, shall be at no additional charge (other than as identified on the bid form) to the Board of Education.
3. Embroidery shall be of a color contrasting with the shirt color.

C. Measurements & Fitting

The contractor will be responsible for furnishing the proper size uniforms for each employee; therefore, the contractor will determine the size of each employee prior to delivery.

1. The contractor will be allotted two weeks to measure all employees, as coordinated by the Board of Education’s Maintenance and Transportation departments. Fittings will be on-site at each location.
2. The contractor will coordinate any additional measurements and size adjustments with the Board of Education’s Maintenance and Transportation departments.
3. The contractor shall display the various uniform options at the time of the fittings.
4. The contractor shall also perform alterations, including hemming, to garments to ensure proper fit, at no additional cost to the Board of Education.

D. Inventory Rollout

1. The contractor will have all employees fitted and provided with uniforms within thirty (30) calendar days of issuance of the Notice to Proceed.
2. New hired employees must be fitted and provided with **new** uniforms within two (2) weeks of notification by the Board of Education.
3. Resized employees must be fitted and provided with uniforms within two (2) weeks of notification by the Board of Education.
4. Board of Education employees will sign a form acknowledging that their uniforms are the correct size and length, fit properly and are the correct number of garments.

- a. One copy of the form is kept by the contractor and one copy is kept by the Board of Education.
- b. If garments do not fit, the employee should note that, and an appointment should be scheduled for a re-fitting.
- c. If any garments are missing, the employee may accept what is being delivered, but should note the deficiency on the form before the driver leaves.
- d. When the missing garments are delivered, the employee shall sign another acknowledgement form.
- e. Each employee should sign the check in and check out sheet provided by the contractor, so all garments will be accounted for.

E. Cleaning

1. All uniforms must be washed in full accordance with the State of North Carolina requirements governing commercial and industrial laundries. All uniforms must be treated for mildew prevention. All uniforms must be laundered using detergents or cleaners that leave the garment odor free. Uniforms, which retain an offensive smell or residual odor after laundering, will not be acceptable.
2. Due to the nature of the work being performed by the employees, contractor can expect the following types of laundering issues: burns from welding, grease, hydraulic fluid, oil and battery acid stains, dirt and paint spots.

F. Finishing

1. All uniforms must be neatly pressed or finished within acceptable standards and the best practices of the industry and delivered one set per hanger.
2. Uniforms shall be bound with a twist tie or other binding material for grouping uniforms by employee.

G. Repairs

1. The contractor shall maintain all rental uniforms in a reasonable condition; to include the replacements of buttons and repairing of rips.
2. Damages due to work related activities, such as burn holes from welding, heavy soiling from grease, rips and tears from work material snags or equipment, paint, and caulking will not be considered as willful abuse and will be repaired or replaced by the contractor. The interpretation and definition of reasonable condition, as used herein, shall be unconditionally that of the Board of Education and the contractor shall unconditionally accept said interpretations. In the event that a garment is beyond repair, the contractor will be required to replace the garment with a new or like new garment at no cost to the Board of Education.
3. Uniforms that have not been satisfactorily repaired at time of delivery, will not be accepted and will be removed from invoice until replaced or altered to acceptable condition.
4. The use of patches to repair uniforms is **not acceptable if size is larger than a quarter.**
5. The contractor shall have a method in the cleaning process that detects required repairs.
6. Repair tags will be provided to each location at the start-up of the contract, and as needed throughout the contract.
7. Employees with uniforms over one and one half (1½) years, shall be exchanged out for new uniforms at no charge.

H. Replacement

1. The contractor will replace garments ripped, permanently stained and/or worn out through normal wear and tear which can no longer be rendered adequately serviceable within two (2) weeks of notice by the Board of Education.
2. Resized uniforms: In the event that an employee's size changes due to an increase or decrease in weight or height, the contractor will make the necessary size adjustments.
 - a. Employees shall be allowed one size change per year at no additional cost to the Board of Education.
 - b. Any additional size change for an employee after the first free change shall be an additional charge (as indicated on the bid form) to the Board of Education.
3. Lost or Damaged Uniforms
 - a. The contractor is responsible for replacing any garment lost while in their possession at no cost to the Board of Education.
 - b. The Board of Education will be responsible for the cost of any uniforms not returned at termination/expiration or lost, destroyed, stolen or damaged through negligence of its employees, only at the price shown on the bid sheet. Any uniforms paid for under this provision will become the property of the Board of Education.

I. Turnaround

The following incidents shall be corrected and/or completed within two (2) weeks of the request by the Board of Education **at no additional charge** to the Board of Education.

- New uniforms for new Board of Education employees.
- Removal of stains from garments or, if unable to remove stains, the replacement of the garment.
- Repair or mending of garments or, if unable to be mended, the replacement of the garment.
- Replacement of a garment lost by the contractor.
- Issuance of a new set of uniforms to an employee due to a change in size.
- Issuance of new sets of uniforms to all employees in the event that the contract is renewed.

J. Change in Quantities

The quantities listed on the bid sheet are estimates based on the Board of Education's current staffing and historical usage.

1. The Board of Education shall have the right to notify the Contractor of its changed needs in uniform service under this contract. If the Board of Education requires an increase in requirements of garments or other merchandise supplied, the Contractor will satisfy the needs under the same conditions herein. If the Board of Education determines a decrease in requirements of garments or other merchandise supplied, the Contractor shall so comply with the appropriate reduction in total contract cost to the Board of Education.
3. Termination of Board of Education Employees: If an employee that receives uniforms is no longer employed by the Board of Education, uniforms will be returned to the contractor. The contractor will stop billing for those uniforms.

V. Account Management

A. Account Liaison

1. The contractor shall have available to the Board of Education a specified Account Liaison to handle all problems regarding billing, deliveries, discrepancies, etc.
2. The Account Liaison shall conduct on-site service survey with a written summary report to be submitted to the Maintenance Director and the Transportation Director on a quarterly basis. This summary shall include:
 - a. Any problems that may be occurring with department requirements and shall state when the problems were resolved.
 - b. Summary of shortages, uniform replacement program, repairs and other types of performance measurement reports.

B. Inventory Management / Quality Assurance

The contractor shall be responsible for all inventory counts of outgoing and incoming uniforms for each individual employee and shall submit to the Board of Education a check-sheet of the same.

1. Each garment shall be identified with a tracking coding tape, which identifies the employee to their uniforms and ensures that the garments are returned to the respective employee after each cleaning.
2. A logbook shall be maintained at each service location. Board of Education employees shall document new uniform requirements, complaints, problems, requests, etc., which shall be reviewed and acknowledged on the service day and rectified accordingly by the contractor.

VI. Invoicing

- A. The contractor will invoice the Board of Education on a weekly basis. The invoice shall indicate the name of the employee and number of sets delivered.
- B. Billing tickets shall be signed by designated employees of the Board of Education and distributed, one copy to the department and one copy to the accounts payable department.
- C. The Board of Education shall be afforded credit for any employee on an extended leave of absence after that employee has been on leave for 21 calendar days. The contractor shall bill at a reduced rate of 50%.
- D. No Added / Hidden Charges
 1. **Contract prices shall include all costs associated with completion of contract requirements.**
 2. Charges and/or fees for other than the bid prices requested on the enclosed bid form for uniforms are unacceptable and will not be paid.
 3. Examples of added charges or fees include service fees, insurance fees; make ready fees, emblem fees, and waste water fees. Additionally, hidden costs will not be paid.
3. Invoices presented for payment for any added charges, fees, or hidden costs will not be paid and will be charged back to the contractor.

CALDWELL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

SPECIAL CONDITIONS

1. Identify the item you will furnish by brand, manufacturer's name, and model number(s). Also furnish specifications and descriptive literature and/or brochures on item(s) bid. By submitting this required information, contractor warrants that the product will perform in accordance with its noted performance specifications, as well as with the performance criteria and representation indicated in any or all documentation which describes said product.
2. Whenever products or materials of any particular producer or manufacturer are mentioned in our specifications, such product or material mentioned is intended to be descriptive of quality and not restrictive to those mentioned.
3. The delivery date(s) shall be stated in definite terms, as delivery is one of the factors considered when making the award. Unless otherwise stated, the Board of Education desires the earliest reasonable delivery.
4. Board of Education reserves the right to cancel all or any part of orders if delivery is not made as represented on the bid. In case of delay, the successful Contractor must notify the Purchasing Agent as soon as the delay is discovered.
5. Failure to deliver by the date promised or failure to comply with the specifications may disqualify Contractor from future bidding.
6. Prices must be stated in units of quantity specified and must be firm.
7. Goods must be fit for the ordinary purposes of such goods and be of fair average quality as included in the implied warranty of merchantability.
8. Bids which are incomplete, conditional, or obscure or which contain erasures, alterations or irregularities of any kind may be rejected.
9. Except for expenses or liabilities arising from the negligence of the Board of Education, the Contractor hereby expressly agrees to indemnify and hold the Board of Education harmless against any and all expenses and liabilities arising out of the performance or default of this Contract as follows: The Contractor expressly agrees to the extent that there is a causal relationship between its negligent, reckless or intentionally wrongful action or inaction, or the negligent, reckless or intentionally wrongful action or inaction of any of its employees or any person, firm, or corporation directly or indirectly employed by the Contractor, and any damage, liability, injury, loss or expense (whether in connection with bodily injury or death or property damage or loss) that is suffered by the Board of Education and its employees or by any member of the public, to indemnify and save the Board of Education and its employees harmless against any and all liabilities, penalties, demands, claims, lawsuits, losses, damages, costs, and expenses arising out of the performance or default of this Contract or arising from or related to the Work, regardless of whether such liabilities, penalties, demands, claims, lawsuits, losses, damages, costs, and expenses are caused in part by the Board of Education. Such costs are to include, without limitation, defense, settlement and reasonable attorneys' fees incurred by the Board of Education and its employees. This promise to indemnify shall include, without limitation, bodily injuries or death occurring to Contractor's employees and any person directly or indirectly employed by Contractor (including without limitation any employee of any subcontractor), the Board of Education's employees, the employees of any other independent contractors, or occurring to any member of the public. When the Board of Education submits notice, Contractor shall promptly defend any aforementioned action. This obligation shall survive the suspension or termination of

this Agreement. The limits of insurance coverage required herein shall not serve to limit this indemnity obligation. The recovery of costs and fees shall extend to those incurred in the enforcement of this indemnity.

10. Prices must include all freight/delivery charges to the location designated in the bid package, and risk of loss shall be borne by successful Contractor until final acceptance of goods by Board of Education.
11. Actual Damages. Contractor hereby expressly agrees that if the performance of this Agreement, or any part thereof, is not completed in a timely or professional manner in accordance with this Bid or any amendment thereto, Contractor and its sureties shall be liable to the Board of Education for actual damages which relate to the Contractors failure to perform or complete the Agreement in the manner described above. If actual damages are agreed upon by the Parties or awarded by the Court, the Board of Education shall have the right to deduct from and retain out of monies which may be then due or which may become due and payable to the successful Contractor, the amount of such actual damages; and if the amount so retained by the Board of Education is not sufficient to pay in full such actual damages, the successful Contractor and/or its sureties shall pay to the Board of Education the amount necessary to effect payment in full of such actual damages.

**Uniform Rental
Maintenance and Transportation Departments**

**Five (5) changes per week per employee
County Logo – Name Emblem**

The quantities listed for the number of sets are estimates for the number of employees that will receive uniforms. The actual count may be more or less depending on staffing levels, which may fluctuate throughout the term of this agreement. Currently there are 32 employees who would require uniforms. Where multiple colors are listed, please indicate if there is difference in price. The Board of Education will choose a shirt and a pant color at the time of the initial order. *Submit samples with bid; non- successful Contractors will be allowed to retrieve their samples.*

Description	Weekly Cost/ Set
65/35 Button up Shirt	11 sets
65/35 Flat Front Pant	11 sets
Pleated Executive Pants	11 sets
Oxford Executive Shirt	11 sets
Blue/White Shirts	11 sets
Micro Check Shirt	11 sets
Jean	11 sets
Cargo Pants	11 sets
Pant	11 sets
Hooded Jacket	2
Gasoline Jacket	2
Insulated Bib Coveralls	2
Insulated Coveralls	2
Jeans	11 sets
Carpenter Jeans	11 sets
Polo	11 sets
Shirt	11 sets

**The term "industrial" is meant to convey the need to be able to withstand heavy-duty soiling and the requisite weekly cleaning.*