IPG TOOLKIT · SYSTEMS FOR INNOVATIVE SCHOOLS

IPG Partner Selection Planner

A guide to the planner for district and building teams applying for MDE's Innovation & Progress Grant (IPG). The planner helps you plan and record how you recruit, screen, select, and evaluate any external partner or vendor paid with IPG funds, and drafts your response to District Plan item (d).

> **The order matters.** You describe your selection process in your application, due in NexSys by December 1, 2026. You run the selection after you receive your award letter. You do not need a partner chosen by December 1. You need a process.

What the planner does

- Shows which purchase method applies to your contract value.
- Walks your team through seven steps, from setting the rules to reviewing performance.
- Scores providers with your weights, flags reviewer disagreements, and ranks providers against your minimum score.
- Writes a draft item (d) response from your entries, with brackets where information is missing.

The planner supplies a process and blank forms. You write your own requirements, scope of work, and criteria from your needs assessment and the interventions in your School Plan.

Sections of the planner

	Section	What you do there	When
0	Purchase method	Enter the total contract value across all grant years and your board's limits. The planner shows the method and what to document.	Before Dec 1
1	Set the rules	Complete the pre-award checklist. Name the review team, single point of contact, approving official, minimum score, tie rule, and reference rules. Enter an estimated award date to see a selection timeline.	Before Dec 1
2	Build criteria	Write weighted criteria from your selected interventions as they were studied. Weights must total 100. Mark the cost criterion to score it by the published price formula.	Before posting
3	Recruit	Record where you post and the sources on your outreach list. Confirm outreach to small, minority, women's, veteran-owned, and labor surplus area businesses.	After award
4	Screen	Apply nine pass/fail checks to every response, record disclosure results, and exclude any provider that helped draft your plan or solicitation.	After award
5	Score	Each reviewer scores 0 to 4 alone. The planner highlights gaps of two or more points and ranks providers.	After award
6	References and selection	Record reference checks, choose a recommended provider, and see any issue to resolve before approval.	After award
7	Contract and evaluate	Rate the partner quarterly on seven dimensions. The planner shows when a corrective action plan or cure notice is due.	During the grant
R	Records	Check off the ten records your procurement file needs.	Throughout
d	Draft for item (d)	Copy the draft into your application template and edit it there.	Before Dec 1

Using the planner before December 1

1. Click **Start a blank plan**. The planner opens with an example district so you can see it working.
2. Complete Purchase method and Set the rules with your business office.
3. Draft your criteria in Build criteria from the interventions in your School Plan.
4. Open Draft for item (d), copy the draft, and finish it in your application template.
5. Click **Copy my plan** and save the text as a .json file. Load it again after your award to run Steps 3 to 7.

Your entries stay in the browser on the device you used. They are not sent to S4IS or anyone else. Save a copy before you clear your browser or switch devices.

Rules the planner follows

Rule	Source
IPG funds are federal Title I funds. The federal procurement standards apply, along with Michigan law and your board policy. Follow the strictest.	2 CFR 200.317 to 200.327
All procurement provides full and open competition.	2 CFR 200.319(a)
A contractor that drafts specifications, requirements, statements of work, or invitations for bids is excluded from competing. The toolkit applies the same rule to requests for proposals as a district practice.	2 CFR 200.319(b), (c)(5)
A noncompetitive award applies only to a micro-purchase, a single source, a public emergency, written MDE approval, or inadequate competition after a solicitation.	2 CFR 200.320(c)
No IPG cost, including a partner contract, is obligated before the award letter is executed and the grant period begins, unless MDE approves pre-award costs in writing.	34 CFR 76.708(c); 2 CFR 200.458
A solicitation states its evaluation factors and their relative importance. Price is one of the factors.	2 CFR 200.319(d)(3); 200.320(b)(2)
No one with a real or apparent conflict of interest takes part in selecting, awarding, or administering the contract. Disclose potential conflicts to MDE in writing.	2 CFR 200.318(c)(1); 200.112
The procurement file shows the method, the basis for selection, and the basis for the price. Keep it at least three years after your final expenditure report.	2 CFR 200.318(i); 200.334
Noncompliance can lead to withheld payments, disallowed costs, suspension or termination of the award, or withheld future funds.	2 CFR 200.339

Purchase method by contract value

Total contract value, all grant years	Method	What to document
Up to $15,000 (or a self-certified limit up to $50,000)	Micro-purchase	The price is reasonable
Above that, up to $350,000	Simplified acquisition	Written quotes from an adequate number of qualified sources, and why you chose
Above $350,000	Formal competitive proposals	Full solicitation, scoring, and award record, with a cost or price analysis

Federal thresholds effective October 1, 2025 (FAR 2.101; 2 CFR 200.1). Your board policy may set lower limits, and the lowest that applies controls. Do not split one need into smaller purchases. The Michigan competitive bid threshold for supplies, materials, and equipment is $32,306 for FY2027, effective November 5, 2026 (MCL 380.1274; MDE memo of that date). Professional services are likely outside it. VERIFY with your counsel how the statute applies to services. ISD administrators may not accept vendor gifts above $82 a month (MCL 380.634).

Keep your application provider-neutral

- Describe a process. Name no provider as already chosen.
- Budget lines name the type of service, not a provider.
- Sign no contract, letter of commitment, or service agreement before your award letter.
- Keep anyone who may compete out of writing your needs assessment, application, scope, or solicitation.
- Log free help you received and who offered it. Free help carries no preference in scoring.

What a 3-point item (d) contains

- **Recruit:** where you post, for how long, and how you reach providers you do not know.
- **Screen:** pass/fail checks, exclusion search, conflict disclosures, and who does each.
- **Select:** review team by role, criteria and their source, scoring, ties, references, approval.
- **Evaluate:** review schedule, dimensions, reviewer, and what happens when results fall short.

The IPG Toolkit is free to every eligible school. Using it gives no provider, including Systems for Innovative Schools, any preference in your selection. This guide explains federal and state rules as read in October 2026 and is not legal advice. Confirm thresholds and local rules with your business office and counsel. Questions about your own application: MDE-SSoS@michigan.gov.