



**Texas Association of School Business Officials
TASBO Award of Merit for Purchasing Operations
Recertification Guidelines**

Recertification

Consecutive awards can be granted to entities through a recertification submission. A purchasing office that achieved the AOM may elect to pursue recertification of its AOM for up to two (2) consecutive years based on the following guidelines:

Eligibility for Recertification

- The entity was awarded either the AOM the previous year or was recertified in the previous year.
- The entity has not been recertified more than two (2) consecutive years.
- Entity's which have a change in the chief procurement officer during the fiscal year (director, administrator, agent, coordinator, or senior buyer) from the person identified on the original application are eligible for recertification in the first year of that individual's leadership but must submit a full application the following year – i.e. if the leader changes in January 2023, the district may submit a recertification application for the current period but must submit a full application the following year.
- The application must be certified by the entity's superintendent or chief financial officer on entity letterhead.

SUBMISSION DATE AND REQUIREMENTS

The application period for recertification is for the previous school year. (Example: The 2023 application is for the 2021-22 school year.) **SUBMISSION DEADLINE: First Friday of November or otherwise noted on website.** Applications received after that day will not receive consideration and entities will be notified.

Method of Submission

Upon receipt of the application via online registration, TASBO will create a Basecamp account for the District to upload documents for review by the review committee. To the greatest extent possible, all documents should be submitted in PDF format. No paper or Dropbox submissions will be accepted.

Requirements for Consideration: Recertification

1. All applicants must complete the TASBO online registration form for the corresponding application year and submit the requested information and applicable fees by the stated deadline. (**Note:** The registration should be completed at the earliest date possible so that TASBO may create a Basecamp site for information to be uploaded to.)
2. A letter of certification from the applicant's superintendent or chief financial officer must be included with the submission packet.
3. Documents must be organized into one master PDF file for the Committee to review.
4. All materials submitted should be marked to identify the entity making the application. Documents should include the county district number followed by the entity name and document. Example: 246909 Round Rock ISD Organizational Chart

Guidelines for Application: Recertification

For recertification consideration by the review committee, each applicant should provide complete information for the elements listed under **Submission Components: Recertification**.

The response for each subject area should be comprehensive enough to illustrate to the review committee that the applicant's purchasing department has continued to strive toward quality improvements within its operations since it last achieved the Award of Merit. Each response should be limited to 500 words when possible.

File Structure for Electronic Submission

Main Folder Name: County District Number XXXXXX District ISD (DO NOT abbreviate ISD name)

Example: 246909 Round Rock ISD

Recertification Application Format

The response document requesting recertification is to be provided as an Adobe PDF file using the following format:

- Section headings are bolded and uppercase, and not bulleted (e.g., PURCHASING OPERATION ORGANIZATION)
- Summary statements are italicized (e.g., *"Provide a summary..."*)
- Indicate individual bulleted topics as presented.
- Response to the summary statement and/or individual bullet point is to be provided in plain text paragraph format.
- Each page of the response is to include the county district number and name of the applying entity in the footer with the page number and the total page count (e.g., Page 1 of 10).

RESPONSE EXAMPLE WITH FORMATTING:

PROCUREMENT CARD SYSTEM

Provide an overview of how your district/department has:

- Changed, modified or cancelled their procurement card process

Two primary changes occurred in this area, as described below.

- **a) Implementation of New Cardmember Program:** As a result of American Express making the District aware of a new program that would provide the District with more points and greater control over managing the points earned with each purchase made, the District has just completed converting from a Procurement Card program to the new Corporate Membership Rewards program. The primary benefit of this program is that it allows the District to consolidate points from multiple enrolled Corporate Cards into a single program account controlled by the Program Administrator (in this case our Chief Financial Officer), which in turn provides the Program Administrator centralized control over the points earned by each cardholder and allows the administrator to redeem the points in more than one way (e.g. Statement Credits, Amazon.com purchases, travel benefits, etc.). Spring ISD will be redeeming its points by requesting statement credits against the statement balance.
- **b) Discontinuation of the P-Card program for our Special Services department:** Over the last 3 school years, changes to the operations within the the Special Services department has resulted in a continuous decline of the use of the P-Card program.

SUBMISSION COMPONENTS: RECERTIFICATION

Subject Areas:

COVER PAGE

- Applying entity name
- Administrative office's address and main phone number
- Superintendent's name
- Purchasing administrator's name and contact information
- Original AOM award year, the current recertification application year, and if this is the first or second recertification application

LETTER OF CERTIFICATION

- Provide a current letter of certification from the entity superintendent or chief financial officer.

PURCHASING OPERATION ORGANIZATION

Provide information on how the entity's purchasing department has changed in the following areas since the AOM was awarded:

- Have your personnel counts changed since your certification? **Yes No**
 - If yes, provide new staff roster with new staff highlighted or bolded for clarity.
- Have you added or reduced personnel positions? **Yes No**
 - If yes, provide new personnel job descriptions or a list of those positions that have been reduced.
- Has your Organizational structure changed since your last certification? **Yes No**
 - If yes, please submit a revised organization chart.

PURCHASING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Provide a summary of how the entity and/or department addressed the following:

- Has your entity made policy or administrative regulation changes to procurement due to recent Legislative action since your last submission? **Yes No**
 - Please provide a brief summary and supporting documents that outline the changes in policy or regulation.
- Have there been any ethical issues or audit findings that are specifically related to Purchasing? **Yes No**
 - If yes, please provide a summary of the issue or the findings and provide documentation on correction action within the department.
- Has your entity purchasing policy manual remained current since the last award or recertification? **Yes No**
 - If yes, please provide changes that were specifically rewritten. If it was a complete re-write, submit the new policy manual.

PURCHASING CONTRACT OPERATIONS

- Please give a brief summary on how your department updates bidder and supplier lists. Be sure to include how changes are communicated to end users.
- How does your department communicate or market to potential new vendors? Please provide a brief explanation if this process has changed since your last submission.
- Has your entity joined any new cooperatives or are you participating in any purchasing alliances that will benefit your purchasing operations since your last submission?
- Please summarize any vendor performance issues that may have led to canceled contracts. Provide a summary of what the purchasing department has done to prevent similar issues in the future. It is not necessary to name the specific vendor.
- Please provide a summary of how verification of annual aggregate limits for compliance with the competitive bidding requirements is handled.

PURCHASING STAFF TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION

Please provide updates, if any, of the following items that have changed in the purchasing department

- Training philosophy
- Types of training received by the purchasing staff (e.g., TASBO training)
- Additional entity staff outside the purchasing department that may have been trained internally on the entity's purchasing processes and procedures, and

- A list of staff that received professional certifications (not limited to TASBO).

PROCUREMENT CARD SYSTEM

- Has the procurement card system been changed, modified, or canceled since certification? **Yes** **No**. If yes, please provide a summary of the specific changes, and,
- If policy has been adjusted or internal procedures changed due to improper use or abuse of procurement cards, please provide a summary and provide copies of the policy or regulations.

WAREHOUSING

Provide a summary of any changes that were made to entity's warehousing operation in:

- The overall goals of the warehouse; and
- How the purchasing or warehouse department ensures that these goals are met.

PROCUREMENT KNOWLEDGE

Provide information of any educational updates of the entity's purchasing staff including any completion of degrees, certifications and training.

TECHNOLOGY

Provide an update of any technology changes affecting the purchasing operation.

COMMUNICATION TOOLS

Provide the following:

- A list of any new TASBO member(s),
- An updated link to the entity's approved vendors list,
- Any new surveys that were conducted in the last year, and
- Any updates to the evidence of purchasing department staff meetings.

COOPERATIVE STRATEGY

Provide any updates on the status of your entity cooperative program since your last submission.

AWARD OF MERIT EVALUATION PROCESS

AOM Management Process

1. The TASBO Purchasing Committee will identify candidates with a strong purchasing background to serve as the coordinator for the Award of Merit process.
2. The TASBO Executive Director will work with the AOM Coordinator and the Purchasing Committee to handle administration of the process, such as publicity, submissions, notices, etc.

AOM Evaluation Process

The TASBO Award of Merit for Purchasing Operations has several thresholds that must be met before an entity can be considered for this award.

1. Evaluation criteria are developed around proficiencies defined by the protocols for the Texas School Performance Review process managed by the LBB and requirements included in the purchasing section of the FASRG.
2. The letter of certification signed by the entity's superintendent or chief financial officer requires a responsible and truthful submission of documents.
3. AOM application evaluators will be approved by the officers of the TASBO Purchasing and Supply Management Research Committee based on experience. Individuals interested in being evaluators shall send an email to the AOM Coordinator no later than July 1 of the current calendar year. The AOM Coordinator may send emails to invite additional individuals to serve as evaluators, as needed. It is preferred that evaluators have worked within the purchasing organization of an entity that has been awarded the AOM.
4. Applications must be submitted to TASBO by the first Friday of November. Each section of the application will be reviewed by two evaluators. Evaluations will be completed within 60 days.
5. The recommendations of the evaluators will be submitted to the AOM Coordinator.
6. If both evaluators recommend that the Award of Merit be granted, the AOM Coordinator will forward a recommendation for approval to the TASBO Executive Director. If both evaluators determine that the Award of Merit should not be given, the AOM Coordinator will determine which comments should be sent to the applicants to help them in improving operations and/or their application for future submissions. If the decision is to not accept an application for AOM, and the applicant believes the decision is in error, the decision may be appealed by the applicant to the TASBO Executive Director, who shall refer the matter to the TASBO Board of Directors if it cannot be resolved.
7. Entities that have a minor deficiency will be notified by TASBO and have 14 calendar days to correct the deficiency. (A minor deficiency is defined as a technicality involving the application, such as a missing signature, independent of the substantive evidence of merit described in the application.)
8. Districts with a June 30th fiscal year end shall have until December 31st to submit their most recent approved financial audit. Districts with an August 31st fiscal year end shall have until January 31st to submit the audit. Audits should be submitted directly to the Executive Director of TASBO.
9. It is anticipated that all entities approved for the AOM will be announced by January 31st.