

Procurement Department

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ADDENDUM #2

IFB #26-SHP-011

Distributor Food Products

TO: ALL BIDDERS
FROM: Sara Rowe, NIGP-CPP, Procurement Agent
DATE: April 20, 2026

This Addendum is issued in response to prospective bidders' inquiries and to add/clarify verbiage in the IFB document.

1. **ADD:** All alternate products being proposed on the Market Basket must be identified and clearly described on Addendum #2 Attachment A. All alternate items are subject to approval or rejection by the HCPS Food & Nutrition Department. Pricing for alternate items shall be included in the Market Basket and included with the Bid Total.
2. **QUESTION:** Page 4, para 2.1 - Bid Prep: one original copy with original signatures – are you requesting a paper copy or is an electronic submission considered 'original signatures'?
ANSWER: Electronic signatures are acceptable. Paper copies will not be accepted.
3. **QUESTION:** Page 4, para 2.1 – File format: You cite that our response is to be submitted in "PDF format ONLY"... do you want the pricing spreadsheet submitted as a PDF or should that be returned in Excel format with the remainder of the documents in PDF format?
ANSWER: Please submit all bid responses in PDF format with exception of the Market Basket. Please submit the Market Basket as an Excel format file.
4. **QUESTION:** Page 23, para 2.4 - Product Formulation Statements: You request the Nutritional Analysis sheets for each item to be submitted 30 days after award date. For the Product Formulation Statements, are these to be submitted with the Nutritional Analysis after award or are these to be submitted at time of bid submission?
ANSWER: Product Formulation Statements may be submitted with your bid response or by request. HCPS may request these sheets prior to award to verify bidder responsibility.
5. **QUESTION:** Page 23, para 2.9 – Equal or Substitute Items: Please clarify that if we want to offer an alternate or equal item that meets or exceeds the product specifications provided,

does the bidder submit the sample product BEFORE submitting our proposal or is the alternate product review completed after submission as part of the evaluation process?

ANSWER: Bidders wishing to submit an alternate or equal item that meets or exceeds the product specifications provided must include a list of items being submitted as alternate on Addendum #2 Attachment A containing item number, manufacturer, description, package size, case count and other important information to allow the Food & Nutrition department to adequately determine if the item is an appropriate alternate. HCPS reserves the right to reject any alternates not meeting the needs of the Food & Nutrition Department.

6. **QUESTION:** Page 24, para 2.14 – Buy American: You request documentation for all items not pre-approved to be submitted prior to contract award. Then it states all documentation must be submitted with samples upon request. Please clarify when this documentation should be provided.

ANSWER: HCPS will request this information.

7. **QUESTION:** Page 25, para 2.17 – Brand Names: The solicitation states “the use of such brand names should not be interpreted as the exclusive brand desired unless so stated”. We are unable to locate any stated indicators that set-aside a product to be the pre-approved brand stated. Is this correct that there are no restrictions requiring the specific brand/item stated in Attachment A, Market Basket?

ANSWER: See Addendum 2 Question #5.

8. **QUESTION:** Page 25, para 2.18.2 Samples: Please clarify when samples are required for submission. Para 2.18.2 states “products for sampling will be requested by the date indicated on the RFP time schedule” but I am not able to determine where that date is located in this solicitation.

ANSWER: All samples will be requested by the HCPS Food & Nutrition Department if needed.

9. **QUESTION:** Page 35 - Check List: Concerning the letter from manufacturer as authorized manufacturer distributor... are you requesting a letter written by one of our manufacturers or would documentation such as a cover page from a supplier listing FoodPRO as a validation?

ANSWER: A cover page is sufficient to meet this requirement.

10. **QUESTION:** Pricing - line 221: We believe this item has been discontinued – am still awaiting a confirmation from our Broker. Should we offer an alternate similar item?

ANSWER: Superpretzel #32155 was provided in error. Please provide pricing and information for Superpretzel #30110

11. **QUESTION:** Pricing – Item # column: Do you want manufacturer or the internal company item number?

ANSWER: Manufacturer item #

12. **QUESTION:** Pricing – Commodity items: There is no provision for providing commodity pricing in the current price grid format. Are you only evaluating commercial pricing at this time?

ANSWER: Yes. Commodity items are solicited through other solicitation processes and are not part of this bid.

13. **QUESTION:** Do you use Commodity Banks to take advantage of Net Off Invoice allowances.

ANSWER: We have separate contracts in place for Commodity products. This bid is for distributor products only. HCPS may utilize Net Off Invoice allowances for any manufacturer-approved processed commodities that are procured through the awarded vendor.

14. **QUESTION:** Would you like a presentation on our ordering system.

ANSWER: Presentations may be requested at the request of the Food & Nutrition Department, however, no presentations are anticipated prior to Notice of Intent to Award.

15. **QUESTION:** Will HCPS allow split deliveries for large orders. Example, if an order is over capacity, will multiple deliveries be acceptable to fulfill the order.

ANSWER: HCPS prefers deliveries to be made at once and not split deliveries.

16. **QUESTION:** Will HCPS provide confirmation of receipt for emailed proposals beyond a read receipt?

ANSWER: It is the Bidder(s) responsibility to verify that the Bid has been received at bids@hcps.org, prior to the Bid Opening. 'Read Receipts' are not sufficient. Bidders may contact the Buyer listed within the solicitation, by email or phone, to confirm receipt of bids.

17. **QUESTION:** Are you able to share your current bid items and price structure, or is this located anywhere to review?

ANSWER: This information is not currently available.

18. **QUESTION:** Do all school locations have loading docks or are there any locations that have limitations that will require deliveries from a truck smaller than a tractor trailer?

ANSWER: 11 schools do not have loading docks. Typical delivery truck used is approximately 28 feet long.

19. **QUESTION:** For CN labels and Product Formulation Statements, will digital copies be acceptable, or are original manufacturer documents required?

ANSWER: Digital copies are acceptable.

20. **QUESTION:** If market basket items are temporarily unavailable due to manufacturer supply disruptions, will HCPS allow approved substitutions?

ANSWER: All substitutions must be reviewed and approved by HCPS.

21. **QUESTION:** Is a letter of commitment to obtain insurance acceptable at bid opening, or must full Certificates of Insurance be submitted with the bid?

ANSWER: A sample Certificate of Insurance must be submitted with the bid submission in Accord format.

22. **QUESTION:** Is this an all or none bid, or can vendors submit offers for some products solicited even if they are not able to offer them all?

ANSWER: Please refer to Bid Section 9 Award.

23. **QUESTION:** I would like to submit the following items for consideration as equal or substitute products in reference to HCPS MD Distributor Food Products (26-SHP-011). Kindly confirm if the following products would be considered acceptable substitutes.

Item 1

Solicited Item: For Line #6, Bar, Benefit Bar Assorted Flavors (J&J Snack)

Offered Substitute: Eat Omega 3 Cranberry Mini Bar, 1.06 oz (Nut-free)

ANSWER: Please submit the product formulation statement with the bid response so that HCPS may determine if this is an approved alternate in addition to Addendum #2 Attachment A

All alternate products are also subject to student taste testing and approval.

24. **QUESTION:** I would like to submit the following items for consideration as equal or substitute products in reference to HCPS MD Distributor Food Products (26-SHP-011). Kindly confirm if the following products would be considered acceptable substitutes.

Item 2

Solicited Item: Line #25, Breakfast, Cinnamon Toast Crunch Bars Soft Filled (2 oz eq grain) (General Mills/Pillsbury)

Offered Substitute: Eat Omega 3 Cinnamon Mini Bar, 1.06 oz (Nut-free)

ANSWER: Please submit the product formulation statement with the bid response so that HCPS may determine if this is an approved alternate in addition to Addendum #2 Attachment A.

All alternate products are also subject to student taste testing and approval.

25. **QUESTION:** I would like to submit the following items for consideration as equal or substitute products in reference to HCPS MD Distributor Food Products (26-SHP-011). Kindly confirm if the following products would be considered acceptable substitutes.

Item 3

Solicited Item: Line #34, Cereal, Bulk, Granola Cinnamon 4 / 35 oz (Malt-O-Meal)

Offered Substitute: Eat Omega 3 Mega O's Cinnamon Cereal Bites, Bulk 40 oz (Nut-free)

ANSWER: This is not an approved alternate.

26. **QUESTION:** I would like to submit the following items for consideration as equal or substitute products in reference to HCPS MD Distributor Food Products (26-SHP-011). Kindly confirm if the following products would be considered acceptable substitutes.

Item 4

Solicited Item: Line #150, Puree, Cereal Breakfast Variety (Café Puree)

Offered Substitute: Eat Omega 3 Mega O's Vanilla Bean Cereal Bites, 2.32 oz (Nut-free)

ANSWER: This is not an approved alternate.

27. **QUESTION:** For Line #17, will you accept Rebellyous Foods' #KNFC212 Plant Based Kickin Nuggets?

ANSWER: Please submit the product formulation statement with the bid response so that HCPS may determine if this is an approved alternate in addition to Addendum #2 Attachment A.

All alternate products are also subject to student taste testing and approval

28. **QUESTION:** For Line #127, will you accept Rebellyous Foods' #KPFC21 Plant Based Kickin Patties?

ANSWER: Please submit the product formulation statement with the bid response so that HCPS may determine if this is an approved alternate in addition to Addendum #2 Attachment A.

All alternate products are also subject to student taste testing and approval.

29. **QUESTION:** For Line #167, will you accept Rebellyous Foods' #KPFC21 Plant Based Kickin Patties?

ANSWER: Please submit the product formulation statement with the bid response so that HCPS may determine if this is an approved alternate.

All alternate products are also subject to student taste testing and approval

30. **QUESTION:** -Do you have the manufacturer item codes you are looking for? Having these codes will help ensure I am submitting the correct items on the bid. I do see manufacturer item numbers listed on the Programs item list, but not on the main bid documentation.

ANSWER: This information is not currently available.

31. **QUESTION:** -If a pack size is not listed and we offer multiple pack sizes for an item, would you like us to include all available pack sizes, or only specific ones?

ANSWER: Include all available pack sizes.

32. **QUESTION:** Can you confirm if this is direct from manufacturer or the distributor portion of the bid?

ANSWER: This is for distributor items.

33. **QUESTION:** I would like to ask if we can submit our **Chicken and Vegetable Dumplings** for consideration under the bid # 26-SHP-011, as an equal or substitute product to the approved Schwan's dumpling item.

Product Code: 1844 Chicken and Vegetable Dumplings with Whole Wheat Wrapper
(7.125LBS/Bag 4 Bags/Case)

Serving Size: 5 Dumping – 100 Servings/Case

ANSWER: Please submit the product formulation statement with the bid response so that HCPS may determine if this is an approved alternate in addition to Addendum #2 Attachment A.

All alternate products are also subject to student taste testing and approval.

34. **QUESTION:** Can HCPS provide estimated annual quantities or historical spend for the food product categories included in this contract?

ANSWER: Estimated quantities are listed in Attachment A Market Basket.

35. **QUESTION:** Will deliveries be centralized to a warehouse, or distributed across multiple school locations? If multiple locations, can a delivery list or count of sites be provided?

ANSWER: Please refer to Section 6 Delivery.

36. **QUESTION:** Are there required delivery schedules (e.g., daily, weekly), or will orders be placed on an as-needed basis?

ANSWER: Please refer to Section 6 Delivery.

37. **QUESTION:** Are there specific storage, temperature control, or handling requirements vendors must meet during delivery?

ANSWER: Please refer to Section 6 Delivery.

38. **QUESTION:** Are subcontractors permitted for distribution or logistics, and are there any approval requirements for their use?

ANSWER: Please refer to Section 17 Subcontractors

39. **QUESTION:** Is there an incumbent vendor, and is prior contract pricing or award information available?

ANSWER: Please see Addendum #2 Question #17

40. **QUESTION:** Are there any service level requirements or penalties tied to missed or late deliveries?

ANSWER: All deliveries must be made in accordance with the bid specifications.

41. **QUESTION:** Will pricing be evaluated strictly on lowest cost, or are there additional evaluation factors such as service capability or past performance?

ANSWER: Please refer to Bid Section 9 Award.

42. **QUESTION:** Are there any anticipated fluctuations in demand (e.g., seasonal or program-based changes) that vendors should consider in pricing?

ANSWER: No anticipated fluctuations in demand are anticipated at this time.

43. **QUESTION:** Can HCPS confirm if partial bids are accepted, or if vendors must bid on the full scope of products?

ANSWER: Please refer to Bid Section 9 Award.

44. **QUESTION:** I am reaching out in regard to the Distributor Food Products solicitation (ID: BPM056157). Is this an all or none bid, or can vendors submit offers for some products solicited even if they are not able to offer them all?

ANSWER: Please refer to Bid Section 9 Award.

45. **QUESTION:** Could you please advise if there is a current awarded contract in place for ice cream, and when the next bid or RFP opportunity may be expected?

ANSWER: Our current contract for ice cream is in effect through March 31, 2028.

I hereby acknowledge receipt of Addendum #2 dated April 20, 2026, to IFB #26-SHP-011: Distributor Food Products.

Company

Name (Print or Type)

Authorized Signature

Date

Note: Bidder shall sign and submit Addendum with bid submission. The same person signing Addendum shall sign the Bid Form. Failure to submit the Addendum may deem your bid as non-responsive.

ADDENDUM #2 ATTACHMENT A

IFB #26-SHP-011

Distributor Food Products

Alternate Products Form

Line	Market Basket Line #	Brand Offered	Manufacturer Item #	Item Description and Product Details	Servings Per Case
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					

14					
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25					

*Please provide any additional items in same format under separate cover.