Proprietary Specifications

Proprietary specifications cite specific brand names or have the effect of restricting the procurement to one vendor or product. You may use proprietary specifications only if "no other manner of description suffices," and then you must provide a written justification for your decision and keep this document in your procurement file. M.G.L. c. 30B, § 14.

In some instances, you may not be able to avoid using proprietary specifications. Even in such cases, you can often foster competition. For example, if you are expanding your computer network to include a new department, you may decide that the new computers should be the same brand and model as the existing computers because you need compatible applications, communication between computers and efficient training of computer users. In cases such as this, you may specify the brand name of the computer manufacturer. Since several dealers may sell the brand and model of computer equipment you are seeking, you will still be able to obtain competitive quotes, bids or proposals in response to your proprietary specifications.

Swampscott Public Schools is in the process of constructing a new elementary school, set to open in the fall of 2024. Following a bidding process, we selected the Rauland Telecenter system for our Public Address (PA) requirements.

Currently, we manage five different PA systems across our five schools, posing challenges for support and maintenance within the technology and facilities department. The upcoming elementary school will merge three existing elementary schools, prompting us to update the Swampscott High School (SHS) system.

Upon choosing the Rauland Telecenter system, we underwent training and leveraged the acquired knowledge to inform our selection of crisis response systems. Recognizing the advantages of maintaining a single platform for the entire school system—facilitating training, support, and crisis response planning—we have opted to exclusively install the Rauland Telecenter for the SHS renovations. Funding for the high school renovations is sourced from the COPS grant, and during the grant application, we highlighted how the system aligns with our emergency response protocol and its planned deployment across all three schools.

Our decision to standardize on the Rauland Telecenter for the high school renovations is rooted in the belief that a uniform PA system across all schools is essential. This approach will not only streamline management but also enhance consistency and support. Looking ahead, as we plan to renovate the middle school in 2027, our intention is to install the same system, ensuring uniformity and ease of management across all three school levels.