6Gx53-5.017 SMALL BUSINESS ENTERPRISE ENCOURAGEMENT PROGRAM:

I. STATEMENT OF POLICY

It shall be the policy of the School Board of Polk County, Florida (School Board) to encourage and support the reinvestment of taxpayer dollars into the Polk and surrounding area's small business community through a race-neutral Small Business Enterprise Encouragement Program. It is the Board's intent that certified small businesses shall have not only the maximum feasible opportunity to participate in the School Board's procurement programs, which involve contracts for provisions of commodities, professional services, contractual services, consulting services and construction services, but also to encourage the development of award criteria and other proactive processes that are in furtherance of this policy. It is further understood that one of the program's features will include outreach initiatives to those small businesses that are also certified women or minority owned business enterprises to ensure a true diversity initiative. The Superintendent of Schools shall develop procedures that will:

A. Ensure nondiscrimination in the administration of the School Board's procurement process;

B. Maintain a procurement environment in which Small Businesses, including W/MBEs, can compete fairly;

C. Prevent barriers that may obstruct the participation of Small Businesses, including W/MBEs, in the School Board's procurement activities.

D. Encourage the utilization of certified small businesses, including W/MBEs, in the School Board's procurement activities

E. Recognize in the award process, whenever possible, those vendors and/or suppliers that further the small business reinvestment vision of the Board as outlined herein

F. Establish an office that will be responsible for the implementation, monitoring and preparation of enforcement recommendations associated with this policy to the Superintendent or his/her designee

G. Provide a means for certified small businesses, including W/MBEs, who are participants in the School Board's procurement process to have a post – award dispute resolution procedure to address concerns with either district staff or third party vendor actions that are inconsistent with this policy through a three (3) step process as a means to facilitate informal resolution of disputed contract related conditions.

H. Develop the resources to measure the effectiveness of the Board's policy

I. Provide periodic reports to the School Board on its program's effectiveness

II. NONDISCRIMINATION

A. The School Board shall not exclude any person from participation in, deny any person the benefit of, or otherwise discriminate against anyone in connection with the award and performance of any contract on the basis of race, color, sex national origin or any other basis prohibited by law.

B. In administering the Small Business Enterprise Encouragement Program, the School Board will not, directly or through contractual or other arrangements, use criteria or other methods of administration that have the effect of defeating or substantially impairing accomplishment of the objectives of the Small Business Enterprise Encouragement Program with respect to individuals of a particular race, color, sex or national origin. School Board procurement practices shall be non-discriminatory and shall promote equality of opportunity.

III. PROCEDURES TO SUPPORT THE SCHOOL BOARD'S SMALL BUSINESS ENTERPRISE ENCOURAGEMENT PROGRAM

IV. DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

V. SCORING MATRIX

VI. EFFECTIVE DATE: The Small Business Enterprise Encouragement policy shall become effective immediately upon adoption.

Statutory Authority: Florida Statutes 1001.32, 1001.41, 1001.42, and 1001.43

Laws Implemented: Consultants' Competitive Negotiation Act as codified in Florida Statue 287.055

Adopted: September 27, 2005

Amended:

September 9, 2008