



*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*  
*Office of the Inspector General*

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March 11, 2011

Ms. Donna Lombardi  
Nutrition Director  
Worcester Public Schools  
20 Irving Street  
Worcester, MA 01609

Dear Ms. Lombardi:

As you know, the Massachusetts Office of the Inspector General (OIG) reviewed Worcester Public Schools' June 2009 receipt of a \$65,465 Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Program Equipment Assistance Grant from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

The OIG is reviewing ARRA-related grants to identify potential vulnerabilities to fraud, waste, and abuse and other risks that could negatively impact the accountability, transparency, and anti-fraud mandates contained in the statutory language and interpretive guidance of ARRA. This review should not be construed as an investigation of the program or a comprehensive programmatic review. The OIG intends these reviews to assist recipients of ARRA funding to identify and address risks.

According to the grant application, your district planned to purchase a "steam cabinet, steam kettle, [and] convection oven" for the Vernon Hill Elementary School and a "convection oven" for the Worcester East Middle School. In January 2011, the OIG requested information regarding the purchase of these items to verify that you conducted the purchases pursuant to federal and state requirements.

The OIG review verified that:

- The district complied with the requirements of M.G.L. c. 30B (Chapter 30B), the Uniform Procurement Act;
- The district obtained three quotes from legitimate business entities;

- The items purchased (two Market Forge double convection ovens, Market Forge steam kettle and pressure steamer) are from an approved vendor on state contract GRO24 for Foodservice Equipment;
- The amount paid by the district for the items matched the amount of the DESE grant award.

For your information, helpful and practical free guidance and training can be found on the OIG website, including step-by-step procurement information available in the OIG manual, [Municipal, County, District, and Local Authority Procurement of Supplies, Services, and Real Property](http://www.mass.gov/ig/igpubl.htm) (the Chapter 30B manual), available at <http://www.mass.gov/ig/igpubl.htm>. In addition, an introductory Online Bidding Basics training course is available on the OIG's website at [http://www.mass.gov/ig/mcppo/bb\\_online.htm](http://www.mass.gov/ig/mcppo/bb_online.htm).

I appreciate your cooperation in this review of ARRA funding. Please do not hesitate to contact my office with any questions or concerns you may have regarding this review.

Sincerely,

Neil Cohen  
Deputy Inspector General

cc: Mary Anne Gilbert, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  
Kathleen C. Millett, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education  
Dr. Melinda Boone, Worcester Public Schools