



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Office of the Inspector General

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INSPECTOR GENERAL

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April 15, 2011

Mr. Tom Coogan
Food Service Director
Fall River Public Schools
417 Rock Street
Fall River, MA 02720

Dear Mr. Coogan:

As you know, the Massachusetts Office of the Inspector General (OIG) reviewed Fall River Public Schools' (District) June 2009 receipt of a \$33,335 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, the District planned to purchase a "walk-in cooler/freezer" for the Talbot Middle School. In December 2010, OIG staff visited the school to verify that the District conducted the purchase pursuant to federal and state requirements and to verify installation of the equipment. The OIG review verified that:

- The District obtained three quotes from legitimate business entities;
- The amount paid by the District, \$32,764 for the cooler/freezer unit plus \$571 for an enclosure for the outside of the unit, matched the amount of the DESE grant award;
- During the site visit, the equipment appeared in operating condition and met the general specifications outlined to DESE in the grant application;
- The item purchased (Bally Walk-In Cooler/Freezer Combination) is from an approved vendor on statewide contract GRO24 for Foodservice Equipment.

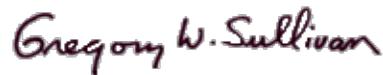
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Also, from its onsite visit, the OIG noticed that the District did not tag the equipment as having been purchased with ARRA funds. According to DESE staff, this is a federal requirement which DESE made known to all recipients via telephone in August 2009. We recommend that if you have not done so, you tag the equipment pursuant to this requirement.

Additional information for future procurements can be found on the OIG website, including step-by-step procurement information available in the current OIG manual, *Municipal, County, District, and Local Authority Procurement of Supplies, Services, and Real Property* at <http://www.mass.gov/ig/igpubl.htm>. A revised version called "*The Chapter 30B Manual*" is soon to be released on the OIG website. Also, a free introductory online "Bidding Basics" training course can be found on the OIG website at http://www.mass.gov/ig/mcppo/bb_online.htm. This serves as a helpful refresher or introductory course on M.G.L. c. 30B, the Uniform Procurement Act.

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,



Gregory W. Sullivan
Inspector General

cc: Mary Anne Gilbert, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Kathleen C. Millett, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Meg A. Mayo-Brown, Fall River Public Schools