



Stuttgart School District

Home of the Ricebirds

Educate, Empower, and Inspire all Students to be Future Ready

2501 South Main Street
Stuttgart, Arkansas 72160
Phone: 870-673-8701



TIPS CONSTRUCTION WAIVER REQUEST

Explanation for Awarding Construction Contract Through the TIPS Process

The Stuttgart School District is requesting to award the construction contract for the turf project through the TIPS purchasing cooperative rather than the traditional competitive bid process due to issues encountered during the original bid process.

Architect Clayton Vaden and his firm issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) in January to solicit bids for the turf project. Bids were opened in accordance with Arkansas bid law on February 10, 2026 at 2:00 p.m., at which time three bids were received. After reviewing the bids, it was determined that none met the required specifications outlined in the RFP.

- Bid #1 was rejected because the company was a construction management firm rather than a turf vendor and did not meet the project specifications.
- Bid #2 was rejected because the proposal included an 8-year turf warranty, while the RFP required a 10-year warranty.
- Bid #3 was initially rejected because the bidder provided \$3 million in construction insurance rather than the \$5 million required by the RFP.

Architect Clayton Vaden reviewed and vetted all three bids and determined that none fully met the requirements of the RFP.

Following Mr. Vaden's guidance, the district entered discussions with United Turf and Track, which was the third bidder. Although United Turf and Track's bid was approximately \$153,000 higher than the lowest bid, their proposal was more consistent with the requested 10-year warranty turf system. The insurance issue that originally caused the bid to be rejected has since been resolved, and United Turf and Track has confirmed they will provide the required \$5 million in construction insurance coverage.

The Stuttgart School District has also developed a working relationship with United Turf and Track over the past two years. During that time, the company assisted the district with repairs and maintenance of the playing surface to ensure the field remained safe for competitive play. The district has paid \$25,309.25 for these services over a two-year period.

Throughout that time, United Turf and Track worked diligently to ensure the field remained safe and demonstrated fairness and professionalism in their work with the district.

Additionally, the district contracted with Lewis, Elliott & Vaden Architects to oversee the design and procurement process. The firm was engaged to ensure the project specifications were appropriate and that the procurement process was conducted properly. Due to concerns related to the field base and drainage system, the district believed it was important to utilize an architectural firm that could represent the district's interests and provide professional oversight. The district has followed Mr. Vaden's guidance throughout the project and trusts his expertise in helping ensure the district receives a product that meets its expectations.

The district believes it is receiving a fair and competitive price for the project. While the project was originally put out for competitive bid, the bids were rejected due to specification issues. United Turf and Track has agreed to honor the pricing from their submitted bid, which supports the district's determination that the project cost remains reasonable and competitive.

For these reasons, the district made the decision to proceed through the TIPS purchasing process. Additionally, the timing of the project is a critical factor. Approval and execution of the contract must occur soon in order to allow adequate time for scheduling and installation during the summer months. Completing the project during the summer will ensure that construction does not disrupt spring or fall athletic programs.

Jeff McKinney



Superintendent
Stuttgart School District

Waiver Request to Exceed Cooperative Purchasing Construction Services Aggregate Amount

In Accordance with § 19-11-249 (d)

Name of School District or Open Enrollment Public Charter School: Stuttgart School District

Name and Title of Person Submitting Report: Jeff McKinney, Superintendent

Contact Information of Person Submitting Report: jeff.mckinney@stuttgartschools.org,

870-674-1303

Reason for Waiver Request (Timeline for Completion, Preferred Contractor, etc...)

The Stuttgart School District respectfully requests a waiver to exceed the \$1 million cap on the TIPS contract for the replacement of the field turf on our existing football field and indoor practice facility.

Our current turf is 11 years old and has reached the end of its useful life. In addition to normal wear, we are experiencing drainage issues and base damage that require a more comprehensive scope of work than a standard turf replacement.

To ensure the project is completed properly and meets the district's long-term needs, we have contracted with our architect, Clayton Vaden of Lewis, Elliott, Vaden Architects, to develop detailed specifications addressing both the base repairs and turf replacement.

Over the past two years, the district has worked with United Turf and Track to repair and maintain the field to ensure a safe playing surface for athletic events. United Turf and Track has provided a competitive proposal for this project, which includes a 10-year maintenance and warranty agreement. They have also committed to a 60-day completion timeline, allowing our spring sports seasons to conclude without disruption and ensuring our fall sports programs can begin on schedule.

The Stuttgart Board of Education approved the contract with United Turf and Track in the amount specified pending legislative approval on Friday February 27, 2026.

United Turf and Track has been vetted by our architect and is recommended by Mr. Vaden and his firm for this project.

For these reasons, we respectfully request approval of this waiver.

Description and Scope of Project (Please attach all relevant documents pertaining to the school construction project): The project consists of removing the old turf, repairing the crumbling base, improving the drainage by upsizing the main two drain lines, and installing new turf. The base has deteriorated and is not supporting the turf above. Due to the unsuitable soils prevalent in Stuttgart, extra attention and effort needs to be placed on installing stabilized soils for the base of the new turf system.

Total Estimated Cost of Project, Including all available extensions : \$1,400,000.00


Contractor/Vendor: Assignor: Symmetry Sports LLC, Assignee: RGroup Inc dba United Turf and Track

Contact Information: Dillon Ripley
United Turf & Track
(405) 747-7748

Vendor Contract #: 23030101

Name of Cooperative Purchasing Program: Tips 23020101-3460

Start Date of Construction: May, 2026

 3.3.26

Signature Date

Waiver Form Cover Letter

The Arkansas 94th General Assembly passed a rule in the 2024 Fiscal Session which directly impacts school construction services under a cooperative purchasing contract. The bill modified 19-11-249 to allow public school districts and open enrollment public charter schools to utilize cooperative purchasing agreements for construction purchases not to exceed a total aggregate amount of one million dollars (\$1,000,000) in a fiscal year from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025.

The rule did allow for a waiver request to exceed the \$1,000,000 aggregate to be submitted to the Executive Subcommittee of the Legislative Council.

Included in this correspondence is an example form for a district to request a waiver of the \$1,000,000 aggregate. This is a suggested sample only and should not be construed as legal advice. ASBA encourages you to defer to authority promulgated by the Executive Subcommittee of the Legislative Council or similar departments of the State, if any is ever issued.

The waiver and any supporting documentation should be directed to the Co-chairs of the Executive Subcommittee as follows **by email or by USPS mail**:

If sending by email, please send to the following: Marty Garrity at garritym@blr.arkansas.gov and Shonna Amos at amos@blr.arkansas.gov.

The form is to be submitted instead of an email to the following address by USPS mail:

Hon. Terry Rice, Arkansas Legislative Council Co-Chair
Hon. Jeff Wardlaw, Arkansas Legislative Council Co-Chair
1 Capitol Mall, Fifth Floor
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201

Once a meeting is scheduled, you will be advised of the date and time. The person requesting the exemption must be available at the meeting to answer any questions. Once approved, the Executive Subcommittee will advise when the approval becomes effective.

The temporary statutory language the General Assembly enacted is currently set to expire on June 30, 2025. It is our understanding that the General Assembly will review the number of waiver requests that are submitted and the amount entities are exceeding the one million dollar (\$1,000,000) aggregate when determining whether to renew or modify the language during the 2025 Regular Session.

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