

October 24, 2025

Dr. Akil E. Ross, Sr.
Superintendent of Lexington-Richland School District Five
1020 Dutch Fork Road
Irmo, SC 29063

Re: Roofing Restoration - H.E. Corley Elementary School and River Springs Elementary School, Solicitation # 2026-011

Dear Dr. Ross,

On behalf of the International Institute of Building Enclosure Consultants (IIBEC), I am writing regarding the procurement process for Solicitation #2026-011 – Roofing Restoration of H.E. Corley Elementary School and River Springs Elementary School. IIBEC is a professional association of design experts specializing in roofing, exterior wall, and waterproofing systems. Our members advocate for building owners to ensure projects comply with codes, standards, warranties, and performance requirements.

We understand the solicitation was withdrawn and, like many, we have concerns regarding the original invitation to bid. Our review indicates that the project specifications were not prepared by an independent design consultant and appeared to rely on a single-source (proprietary specifications) procurement approach. We encourage the district to avoid specifying products from a single source, including proprietary specification, and to embrace full competition wherever possible.

IIBEC advocates for the use of independent, credentialed design consultants with no financial interest in the products specified or installed on publicly funded construction projects.

Open and fair competition is essential in architecture, engineering, and design construction procurement. Perceived conflicts of interest can reduce the quality and number of bids, discourage innovation, and even lead potential bidders to forgo submitting proposals altogether. With thousands of IIBEC-credentialed professionals across the country, public entities have access to highly qualified, independent designers who can safeguard project integrity, maximize value, and support a truly competitive procurement process. For more information or to locate credentialed building enclosure professionals, please visit <https://consultant.iibec.org/>.

To mitigate conflicts of interest, IIBEC recommends that public owners:

1. Require all consultants to sign an affidavit confirming they will not receive any direct or indirect compensation from other sources for their work.

2. Require all consultants to sign an affidavit confirming they do not supply, manufacture, or distribute materials, nor bid on construction services related to the project.

Embracing full competition maximizes value for public owners and taxpayers. Contract documents should avoid specifying products from a single source, including over-specification, and ensure all materials are available from multiple suppliers. IIBEC recommends specifying multiple material sources in all publicly funded projects to promote competition, ensure best value, and prevent increased costs associated with proprietary, single-source specifications. Specifications focused on performance and life-cycle cost goals further encourage competition among material suppliers.

IIBEC's policy recommendations, *Safeguarding Taxpayer Funds During Procurement of Design and Construction Services*, emphasize the importance of separating design from product manufacture and installation to remove bias and promote best practices. Using multiple material sources and performance- or life-cycle-based specifications supports both competition and cost-effective outcomes.

In conclusion, every building enclosure requires proper design, appropriate materials, and quality installation. Independent design consultants provide design services in accordance with building codes and client needs, free from conflicts of interest, and they often assist with bid document preparation, bid review, and payment certification. Separating design, construction, and materials supply ensures the district and its taxpayers receive maximum value for their investment.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions regarding the recommendations in this letter or if IIBEC can serve as a resource to support your efforts in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brian', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Brian Pallasch, CAE
Executive Vice President & CEO

Cc: Lauren Bové, CPPO, CPPB, Procurement Manager II