



Customer Success Story

How a small team conquers chaos and improves process

Bonfire & San Antonio Independent School District

When you're a smaller team and you're under pressure to get results, you need to be able to deliver value where it matters most. So when SAISD's hard-copy, manual, and frustrating process was getting in the way, they knew they needed to find a better way forward. With Bonfire, SAISD was able to streamline their entire process and allow their team to add value where it matters most - **the decision itself.**

Organization Profile

San Antonio Independent School District (SAISD) serves approximately 54,000 students at 86 schools within Downtown San Antonio, Texas. SAISD prides itself on its comprehensive instructional programs and related services for students from pre-kindergarten through to 12th grade.



KEY CHALLENGES

- Time-consuming and wasteful hard-copy processes.
- Manual scoring collection and aggregation.
- Managing stakeholders and making evaluation timelines.

IMPLICATIONS

- Elimination of hard-copy and manual processes.
- Immediate increase in team efficiency and value-add.
- Up-to-speed within one week of implementation.

Procurement at SAISD before **Bonfire**

The five-person purchasing team at SAISD works hard to support their internal customers as efficiently as possible, deliver the highest value, while also ensuring compliance with federal, state, and local laws. However by the middle of 2016, the team faced significant challenges with their processes.

It's a common situation that many organizations like the district have faced. In a word? "Chaos," says Andrea Tena, Contract Administrator at SAISD.

Relying on hard-copy submissions resulted in impractical volumes of paper and binders for all stakeholders. Organizing and managing the evaluation team was a logistical challenge. Validating submissions, creating and distributing copies, and responding to open records requests become a time-consuming prospect. Scoring and justifications were also paper-based, requiring the purchasing team to manually enter data and formulas into Excel.

"I'm not a fan of redundancy - I don't like doing the same thing over and over again," states Benjamin Mora, then the Assistant Contract Administrator at SAISD. "You can complain about the work, but most importantly when you do something three or four times, it's four opportunities to make four mistakes."

"This was my first time on Bonfire, and it was an absolute delight! Clear instructions, easy uploading. I loved everything about it. I wish all RFP issuers would use this."

ACTUAL SAISD BIDDING SUPPLIER

Finding the **right software**

The team knew the potential software had to support their processes, but the question was which software platform would best support their needs.

Those needs went beyond simple online submission - they wanted a cloud-based platform that would support their entire purchasing process; from managing vendors, creating projects, accepting proposals, evaluating those proposals, and managing the resulting contracts.

Ultimately, the platform had to be flexible and easy to use, while still powerful enough to handle their project needs (including both RFPs and line-item bid projects). The team was weary of systems that were labour intensive, difficult to implement or "data hungry" - likely creating more problems and work than before.

SAISD was actively searching for the right software and it quickly became clear to the team that Bonfire had the potential to fit the needs of the district and support the purchasing team's entire workflow.

Choosing **Bonfire**

Bonfire had all the fundamentals that SAISD was looking for, especially when it came to the evaluation of projects. Running a mixture of document-based and line-item RFPs and RFQs, the team saw how Bonfire's BidTables and Projects evaluations tools could streamline their processes and empower them to add value to other more important activities and initiatives.

While considering Bonfire, SAISD was also evaluating other platforms. Tena and Mora had gone through five or six demonstrations from other well-known eSourcing providers, but felt like none of the solutions matched their needs the way Bonfire did.

"That's how we came down to seeing that Bonfire was the best fit for us," says Tena. "There was really nothing we saw that came close to what Bonfire was providing."

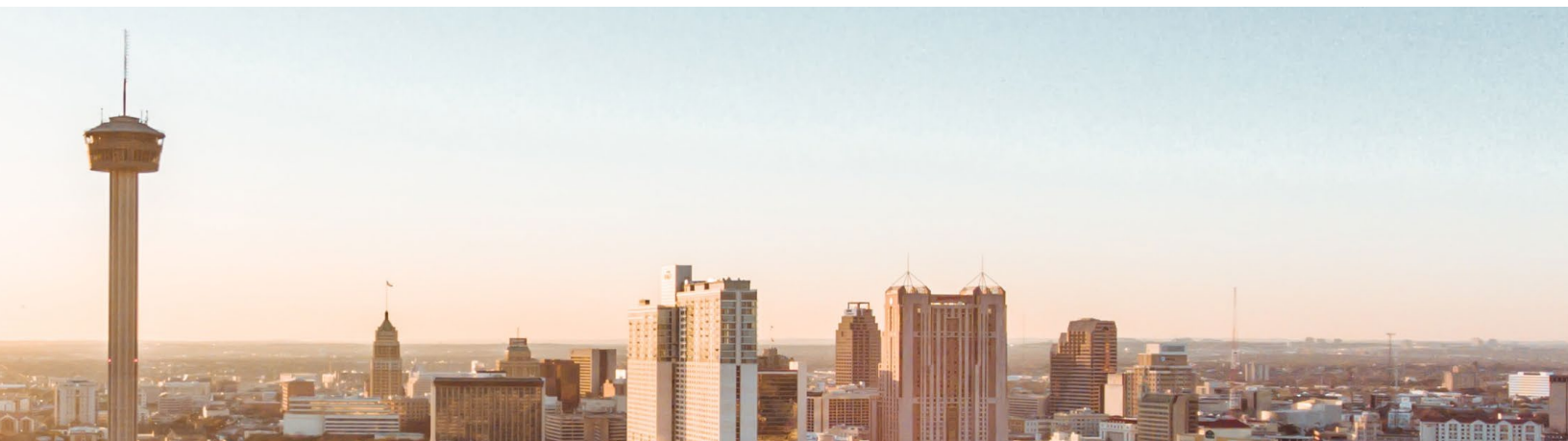
If SAISD saved 12 hours per project, that gives back the team 780 hours or 32 days of valuable time.

Getting Started with **Bonfire**

The district's adoption of Bonfire was completed quickly and the team was up to speed almost immediately. "It felt like we were registering a new Facebook account. That's really how easy it was," stated Tena. Mora added, "We got really savvy and proficient in the tool - it took us maybe a week."

The implementation has also smooth for the team's internal customers and evaluators. "We are getting [our evaluators] to use the tool - and like the tool - within an hour," says Mora.

The district's suppliers have also adopted Bonfire quickly and have seen the benefits it provides. "They love it," says Mora, citing ease of use and paper/cost savings for their suppliers. Out of all respondents in a satisfaction survey, the district's suppliers gave their overall Bonfire experience an average approval rating of over 91%.



Bonfire's impact at SAISD

Bonfire had an immediate positive impact on the purchasing team's performance, as well as their ability to add value to their internal customers and SAISD as a whole. The manual tasks required by the paper-based process were eliminated, allowing Tena and Mora to manage all of their projects and submissions in a single, digital place. Bonfire's smart automation features mean that the team no longer spends hours manually aggregating and calculating evaluation scores, slashing project times and helping to improve purchasing performance.

The district runs approximately 65 solicitations every year and while it can vary by project, the team recognizes that they've seen significant time savings using Bonfire. Even if Bonfire saved the team an average of 12 hours over the course of each project, that would annually represent 780 hours or 32 days of working time that they can now spend on more value-added initiatives and activities.

"We're now finding time to do other things, like actually make improvements into our office, our own procedures, versus being constantly bogged down with just issuing solicitations and doing all that paper work," says Tena.

The purchasing team also has complete visibility into their projects and how they are unfolding, making it straight-forward to manage the evaluation team and keep projects on track.

Bonfire has also delivered benefits beyond the operational and financial gains from more efficient sourcing. "When [our stakeholders] are using this tool, they genuinely understand how powerful it is, and become sold - 'I don't ever want to go back to the way things were.' I wear that with a little bit of pride," says Mora.

"We're becoming even more efficient than what [we] could have possibly ever imagined."

ANDREA TENA, CONTRACT ADMINISTRATOR, SAISD



See Bonfire for yourself

Learn how our intuitive, powerful,
and easy-to-use platform can help you
make better, faster sourcing decisions.

[Request a Demo](#)



GoBonfire.com