



CES NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2022

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Feature Article

Can Cooperative Purchasing Help Stretch Your Budget?

Purchasing anything for a K-12 school or district can turn complicated quickly — especially when the cost of goods reaches a state's purchasing threshold and a formal bid is required.

As school business officials know, the process is certainly not like the consumer experience of finding and hiring a contractor. Instead, the rules for school purchasing agents can be tricky, as they impose myriad protocols to ensure that tax dollars are efficiently, fairly, and adequately distributed.

Behind-the-scenes costs build up as the purchasing agent places legal ads in local newspapers and writes bid terms and conditions. Purchasing agents must create product specifications that meet district requirements, but they still have to be impartial and fair to competing vendors at the same time.

Meanwhile, time is money, and waiting for bid responses can take 30 days. Upon arrival, bids must be evaluated on the basis of specifications, criteria in terms and conditions, and state law. To gauge the ability of vendors to perform, the purchasing agent also delves into bidders' past responsiveness to predict potential performance. If necessary, they will mediate bidder protests and more — all before the bid is even awarded.

Once the award is secured, the purchasing agent must go back to building and nurturing relationships with other companies because the next bid journey is right around the corner. Although school bidding might sound "easy" to outsiders, it's a complex process with many moving parts, and there's a lot of money at stake for schools that prefer to spend money on kids rather than on administration.

Reducing Nagging Bidding Pain Points

The process of seeking competitive bids proves tedious for purchasing agents, cumbersome for employees who want supplies, and toxic for the district's bottom line.

What tops the list of pain points? The writing of product specifications, the 30-day (at minimum) wait period for bids to come in, and the potential to field bad bids or unreliable bidders.



It's not unusual for a school district to spend upward of \$5,000 in staff costs and \$500 in advertising when conducting bids. When bids come in, low bidders might not have the "get-along" personalities needed to do the best job for a district. All of this proves frustrating for schools.

So many of those pain points center on the siloed procurement process among schools, which is why many districts tap cooperative purchasing programs for streamlined procurement that is legal, faster, and cheaper. When school districts get together, efficiencies increase for purchasing agents, prime vendors are accessible because buying power increases, and cost goes down for individual districts.

Benefits of Cooperative Purchasing for Schools and School Districts

Just like buying in bulk can provide a huge return on investment, so can working with a cooperative purchasing entity. In general, all ROI can be divided into two buckets: hard and soft savings.

Hard savings are easy to measure because they're direct, like the cost to announce and advertise a bid. Soft savings are a bit harder to define because they're indirect. For example, the time staff members take facilitating their own bids can be labeled a soft cost.

In the soft category, a simple bid can cost as much as \$5,000 in staff time. Large enterprise-level purchases can cost five times that much. A cooperative purchasing contract removes the paperwork and bureaucracy so that purchasing agents can spend time on more important tasks, like developing strategies and offering needed management consultation.

A Quick Overview of the Cooperative Purchasing Agreement Process

When it comes to the pain points associated with the school bidding process, cooperative purchasing systems like the Association of Educational Purchasing Agencies (the AEPA, for short) can provide instant and long-term relief.

AEPA, as an umbrella organization, uses the leverage of 29 state-level purchasing cooperatives [-including CES-] to aggregate national demand. It centralizes the hardest parts of bidding: the development of specifications, the writing of terms and conditions, the solicitation of bids, and the evaluation of offers.

But the association respects respective state procurement rules and allows each state to make its own award decisions for contracts that have passed through the AEPA's evaluation and recommendation process. Therefore, the state-level cooperatives serve as curated sources for awarded bidders representing a variety of purchasing categories.

By making the bidding and purchasing process less cumbersome, AEPA helps schools and school districts make the most of their financial resources. At the same time, vendors appreciate leveraging the ability to serve educational clients across state lines without having to submit countless bid proposals. Once a vendor has been approved, the vendor's original bidding contracts can be renewed annually for up to four years. That's a clear incentive for the vendor to offer an unbeatable price.



How Does AEPA Approach Cooperative Purchasing?

Interested in learning more about how cooperative school district purchasing differs from a traditional procurement strategy? Here's how a generalized AEPA-initialized bidding process works.

First, AEPA assigns an oversight committee made up of K-12 peers to a specific bidding category (such as office supplies, instructional materials, or security solutions). With the assistance of an expert consultant, the oversight committee studies the bidding category and identifies possible vendors.

Then, the oversight committee puts bid terms, conditions, specifications, and evaluation procedures into a bid document. Any category-specific terms are merged into a package with general legal terms and conditions common to all participating agencies. The oversight committee loads the bid solicitation package into an electronic bidding platform, which is then distributed to hundreds — if not thousands — of potential bidders. Concurrently, each of the participating AEPA member agencies places bidding advertisements in newspapers within their jurisdictions to encourage submissions and comply with state laws.

After that, vendor companies submit bids electronically, and a separate bid committee evaluates bidders' paperwork before turning in correctly completed documents to the respective oversight committees. The oversight committees evaluate all bids on specification compliance and price and then submit their results to the full AEPA board. Board members vote to make formal award contract recommendations to the respective state-level agencies.

Next, individual state members consider the AEPA board's recommendations. If they believe the recommended bidders meet their state laws, rules, and regulations, they bring the bids to their local agency boards for a formal contract award. Each state member executes paperwork to implement the contract according to specific procedures. The awarding state agency and vendor work together to promote contract usage within the state.

Awarded vendors and state agencies report sales to AEPA quarterly. Likewise, contracts are reviewed yearly for performance and sales volume. Those that receive positive recommendations by the oversight committee are eligible for a one-year renewal in all AEPA state jurisdictions.

Is Your School District Using AEPA Cooperative Purchasing Contracts?

Through one or more of the 29 member agencies of AEPA, school districts in all 50 states can take advantage of purchasing contracts that have already been bid, evaluated, and awarded.

If you're eager to smooth out the buying and bidding process, peruse AEPA contracts and work with an AEPA member co-op [-CES is the AEPA member in New Mexico-], all of which are local agencies with bidding authority.

Why waste days, weeks, or months? Get projects handled fairly and legally, faster, and more cost-effectively.

By Tammy Hurst, AEPA President



Tip of the Month

Scheduling Meetings

1. Get efficient at scheduling meetings by creating pre-defined time slots for different types of meetings in your calendar. For example, "M-W-F 9AM-10AM 15 mins intro calls; M-W-F 2PM-4PM 30 min follow up mentor meetings, etc."
2. Always propose three to four specific times for a meeting, depending on the type of meeting, and fit it into available time slot.
3. If the person you are trying to connect with is super busy, be flexible, break your blocks and accommodate them.
4. Minimize the number of emails to schedule a meeting. If a person agreed to a meeting, propose specific times immediately. Don't ask them to suggest the times.



Procurement News

1) Contract Expirations:

BSN Sports – GSA Expired 1-17-22

2) Contract Renewals: AEPA

019B: Custodial Supplies & Equipment	Hillyard, Inc
019C: Office Supplies	Quill Corporation
#019-E: School & Instructional Supplies	BLICK Art Materials, LLC Pitsco, Inc. Quill Corporation School Specialty, Inc
020-A: Natural and Synthetic Surfaces for Sports Fields, Tracks, Courts, Playground, and Landscaping Applications	Act Global Americas Inc. Astro Turf Field Turf Hellas Construction Shaw SportsTurf Shaw Industries Sprinturf, LLC Robert Cohen-Sports Surfaces Dist
#020-C: Digital Resources & Inst. Materials	Bio Company Inc. Imagination Station, DBA Istation Complete Book and Media Supply Inc. Mackin Educational Resources
#020-D Facility Management Solutions	Dude Solutions
#020-E Lawn & Grounds & Equipment	Bobcat Company Husqvarna Professional Products, Inc.
#020-F Digital Display Solutions	Daktronics, Inc.
#021-A Athletic Field Lighting	Hellas Construction
#021-B Hardwood & Synthetic Flooring	Robert Cohen - Sport Surfaces
#021-C# Digital Multi-Function Devices, Printers, and Services	Kyocera Document Solutions America, Inc Konica Minolta Business Solutions, Inc.
#021-D Roofing and Building Envelope Services	Weatherproofing Technologies (Tremco)
#021-G Security Solutions	Capitol Electronics Inc. 34ED, LLC dba CENTEGIX DLD Technologies Corporation, dba Deledao



3) Acquisitions:

Integrated Control Systems sold to Automated Logistics/Carrier Corporation. Watch for Bluebook change as documents are received or contract canceled.

4) Terminations: None

5) New Contract Awards:

2022-04 Robotic, Self-Motorized, Autonomous Disinfection and Sterilization	Build with Robots SNAP Solutions Inc.
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6) Current & Upcoming Solicitations

RFP #	RFP Description	Release	Due	Awards
2022-05 New Category	<i>Apple Branded Devices and Related Products and Services</i>	01/24/22	02/21/22	02/28/22
2022-06 New Category	<i>Vehicle Electric Charging Stations Equipment, Installation, and Parts</i>	01/24/22	02/21/22	02/28/22
2022-07 New Category	Automotive Parts, Lubricants, Supplies, Equipment and Related	01/24/22	02/21/22	02/28/22
2022-09	<i>Fuel – Gasoline, E85, Diesel, Biodiesel, and Related</i>	03/28/22	04/22/22	05/03/22
2022-10	<i>Heavy Equipment, Parts, Accessories, Leasing and Related</i>	03/28/22	04/22/22	05/03/22
2022-11	<i>Material Handling Equipment, Parts, Accessories, Leasing and Related</i>	03/28/22	04/22/22	05/03/22



March 20, 2022



Calendar of Events

- 3/2 Read Across America Day
- 3/2 PED NMACTE Monthly Social
- 3/8 PED EDGAR Training
- 3/9 Governor's Deadline for Legislative Bill Signing
- 3/9-10 PED AP Spring Workshops
- 3/13 Daylight Savings Time Begins
- 3/15 PED CTE Application Portal Opens
- 3/15 NMSBA Spring Region V Meeting - Tucumcari
- 3/16 NMSBA Spring Region II Meeting - Pecos
- 3/17 Saint Patrick's Day
- 3/20 Spring Equinox
- 3/22 NMSBA Spring Region VIII Meeting - Virtual
- 3/28 NMSBA Spring Region VI Meeting - Jal
- 3/29 National Vietnam War Veterans Day
- 3/31 César Chávez Day

MARCH 2022						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		



The Order Corner

This information is being shared for a second consecutive month because so many members are encountering these errors repeatedly.

When accessing the Bluebook online, there are a couple of things you can do to make your experience go more smoothly:

1. Setting a bookmark for the actual Bluebook Page introduces errors into the login process.

INSTEAD: Go to the CES homepage (www.ces.org) and set your bookmark. Then anytime you need to access the Bluebook, begin at the CES homepage and select the 'Bluebook' link in the upper right corner.

2. Logging out then back in within a tab that has been in use through two or more logins often introduces errors into the login process.

INSTEAD: Always begin your login process by opening a new tab or window in your browser, and go from there.

New Staff



Amanda Hall, new Executive Administrative Assistant at CES, is a New Mexico transplant hailing from Maryland. She has a public affairs background, specializing in supporting a public sector senior leader. Amanda graduated in 2008 Cum Laude with a BA in English from the University of Maryland Eastern Shore. She welcomes challenges and takes pride in providing excellent internal and external customer service.



Compliance Corner

Cindy Soo Hoo, TAP Consultant

Do You Have the Required Members Present at the IEP Meeting?

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) specifies the required members of an Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting. In terms of school personnel, they include:

- 1) Not less than one regular education teacher of the child (if the child is, or may be, participating in the regular education environment);
- 2) Not less than one special education teacher of the child or, where appropriate, one special education provider of the child;
- 3) A representative of the public agency who:
 - a) is qualified to provide or supervise the provision of specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of children with disabilities;
 - b) is knowledgeable about the general education curriculum; and
 - c) is knowledgeable about the availability of resources of the public agency; and
- 4) An individual who can interpret the instructional implications of evaluations results.

34 CFR §300.321

- The person referenced above who is able to interpret the instructional implications of the evaluation results could be any one of the preceding required members or any other person who may be invited to the meeting by the parent or the public agency. This might include an evaluator who conducted the educational evaluation or some other person with knowledge about the child or the evaluation of the child.
- There may be times when a required member of the IEP Team is unable to attend. If so, there are specific provisions that must be followed. Those provisions will be discussed in a later segment so you can ensure you are following the regulations under the IDEA.
- Districts do not have a legal obligation under the IDEA to include related service providers as members of the IEP Team; however, it is important to invite them as they have pertinent information as to how the student is progressing toward the goals specified in the IEP. At the very least, the related service provider should provide information and input that contribute to the development of the IEP.
- A speech and language pathologist is not considered a related service provider if the student is receiving speech and language services as their sole service. In this case, the speech and language pathologist would fit the definition of a special education provider as delineated in number two above.
- It is important to note that while related service providers are not required members of an IEP Team under the IDEA, you should check to see if your individual district has made a requirement regarding their attendance.
- As always, for legal guidance on any issue involving special education, please contact the appropriate person for your district.

Should you have any questions about this topic or any other topic involving special education, I invite you to contact either Loretta Garcia, TAP Coordinator, at lgarcia@ces.org or Lianne Pierce, Director of Ancillary Services, at lianne@ces.org respectively.



Job Opportunities at CES

Ancillary Opportunities at CES

Adaptive Physical Educator – Region 4
Adaptive Physical Educator/ RT – none currently
Audiologist – Regions 1, 2
Certified Occupational Therapist Assistant – Region 4
Certified Orientation Mobility Specialist – Regions 2, 4
Certified Orientation Mobility Specialist/tyi – Regions 1, 2
Educational Diagnostician – Regions 4, 8
Occupational Therapist – Regions 2, 4, 8
Physical Therapist – Regions 2, 3, 4
Physical Therapist w/Doctorate – none currently
Psychiatrist – Regions 3, 4
Registered Nurse – Regions 1, 2, 4, 8
Rehabilitation Counselor – Region 2
Recreational Therapist – Region 4
School Psychologist – Regions 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
Social Worker – Regions 2, 3, 4
Speech/Language Pathologist – Regions 1, 2, 4, 7
Teacher for the Visually-Impaired – Region 4

Other Opportunities at CES

Professional Services Staff positions (e.g.s., consultants, interims)

Bulletin Board





FEBRUARY LEAP TEACHER OF THE MONTH

LEAP PILLAR - LEADERSHIP



John Markley



During John Markley's 33 year Naval career, he learned that being a good leader means being a good team member. As a team member, John ensures that his fellow LEAP candidates have as much support as he can provide and is constantly providing positive words of encouragement. He is awed and amazed by their ability, and their success is inspiring to all. Observing them, as their careers begin, John realizes that the future of teaching is in great hands. Recently John was awarded an innovative teaching grant, with the overall effort to install a 3D holographic fan inside his classroom. Innovative teaching is the hallmark of LEAP, and with the variety of backgrounds that we all come from it is important to bring our knowledge and experiences into the classroom with an effort to evolve education competing with the evolution of our students. Inside the classroom John thinks of his students as part of his team. Most of his students have overcome herculean obstacles created by COVID, but their continued positive attitude and persistence is motivational to observe. In Naval Aviation, after every event John's team would "debrief" the event. John finds that during LEAP events this approach continues to work, and when placed in a breakout room during professional learning sessions it is a unique opportunity to communicate with other educators and learn what works, and what doesn't. Las Cruces Public Schools is blessed to have John on their team!



Spring Budget Workshop

2022 Spring Budget Workshop

When: April 6 - 8, 2022

Where: Hotel Albuquerque at Old Town
800 Rio Grande Blvd NW, Albuquerque, NM 87104



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