



CHIPPEWA VALLEY SCHOOLS PURCHASING INSTRUCTIONS

Purchasing Overview

Chippewa Valley Schools operates as a decentralized purchasing district, meaning purchasing authority is delegated to individual buildings. As a result, there are several approved methods for procuring goods and services:

- Purchase Orders (POs)
- Blanket Purchase Orders
- Purchasing Cards
- E-Catalog
- Check Requests
- Employee Reimbursements / Mileage Reimbursements

All of these methods must follow the District's established purchasing processes and guidelines. While exceptions may occasionally be necessary, they should be rare and must be approved in advance.

Purchase Orders (PO)

The AS400 Purchase Order method remains the standard method for ordering and payment processing for both **General and Internal Funds**. It is a legal contract that protects the District, and therefore:

- All POs must be typed, approved, and sent to the vendor prior to requesting goods or services.
- POs must clearly identify the goods/services being purchased.

POs should be used for:

- Supplies, furniture, equipment, software, service warranties, services, and all Amazon orders
- Capital outlay / fixed asset purchases
- Non-contracted maintenance, repair, and operational supplies and services
- Vendors requiring prepayment or deposits

If the purchase involves a new vendor, a [Vendor Application](#) and [W9](#) must be submitted to the Business Office prior to placing the order. Please allow 2-3 business days for vendor review and processing.

Creating Purchase Orders

When referencing a quote, proposal, or invoice, create the PO using the details provided – include item descriptions, quantities, unit prices (AS400 will automatically calculate the total), and item numbers. In the Comments section, include any relevant information that helps clarify the purpose of the PO, such as:

- Quote number
- Subscription period
- Board of Education (BOE) approval date

For step-by-step guidance, refer to [Purchase Order Reference Guide](#).

If there is no external document to reference, provide as much detail as possible on the PO so that all end users can clearly understand what the purchase is for.

Ordering with a Purchase Order

POs should be sent to vendors at the time of ordering when procuring supplies, equipment, and furniture.

Exception: Amazon orders do not require POs to be sent to the vendor.

Sending the PO is how the order is officially placed and processed. Verbal orders, email orders, or signed quotes/proposals are not acceptable substitutes for a PO. Submitting a PO protects the District by establishing a legally binding contract with the vendor. It also provides a record of the agreed-upon terms and conditions, such as quantity and price, and can be used to resolve disputes.

Once goods or services are received, PO receivers should be processed in AS400. After processing:

1. Assemble the invoice packet in the following order:
 - a. Invoice(s) on top
 - b. Packing slips and/or supporting documents in the middle
 - c. Signed PO at the bottom
2. Submit the packet to Accounts Payable for payment processing

Paying with a Purchase Order (Confirming POs)

There may be instances where a vendor sends an invoice for payment **before a PO has been** created. This typically occurs with service and repairs where upfront costs are unknown.

In these cases:

- Create a PO based on the invoice, including all relevant details.
- Do not send the PO to the vendor, as the goods/services have already been provided.
- Receive the items in AS400, then submit the invoice packet to Accounts Payable for processing.

Estimating Purchase Order

Estimating POs may also be created when an estimate is received for future services. While the amount may vary, an Estimating PO allows the anticipated cost to be allocated or encumbered in AS400. Once the final invoice is received, the PO amount may be adjusted as needed (becoming a Confirming PO), received, and then submitted to Accounts Payable for payment processing.

Blanket Purchase Orders

Blanket POs are used for recurring purchases of supplies and services from the same vendor throughout the school year. These POs are created for a set time (usually annually) and invoices are liquidated against the total amount over time.

Key guidelines:

- Blanket POs are a helpful budgeting tool, as the total cost is encumbered in AS400.
- They are not to exceed one school year.
- The PO amount should reflect the total anticipated cost.
- If using a non-contracted vendor, the total must not exceed \$5,000 per year.

Purchasing Card (P-Card)

Purchasing cards may be used for:

- Food
- Travel
- Hotel accommodations
- Conferences
- Memberships
- Emergency or unexpected needs

P-Cards function like a merchant credit card but **should not be used to bypass the PO process out of convenience**. When a P-Card is used, a PO is not required.

At the end of each billing cycle:

- The cardholder will submit a monthly report with:
 - All detailed receipts
 - Supervisor's signature

Note: Cardholders should not submit for employee reimbursement for purchases made with a P-Card.

P-Card Monthly Report

Monthly reports must be submitted to the Business Office within five days after each statement period (e.g., xx/28/xx – xx/27/xx).

Each report should include:

- The itemized statement report
- Original, detailed receipts and supporting documentation
- Signatures from both cardholder and their supervisor

Each transaction must include:

- The appropriate ASN
- Vendor name
- A brief description of the purchase

E-Catalog

The [E-Catalog](#) system is an online ordering platform that includes three approved vendors:

- School Specialty
- Staples
- Office Depot

Users can select a vendor, which redirects them to the vendor's website. Items can be added to the cart and submitted electronically for approval. Once submitted:

- The assigned authorizer and Purchasing Department will review the order.
- If approved, Purchasing will submit the order to the vendor.
- If cancelled, the user will receive an email with further instructions.

Note: Orders placed through the E-Catalog system do not require a Purchase Order, and packing slips do not need to be sent to the Business Office.

Purchasing Thresholds and Requirements

Purchase Amount	# of Quotes Needed	Purchasing Process
<\$4,999	Minimum of 1	Obtain quote, create PO, sign PO, send to vendor to place order
\$5,000 - \$30, 511	Minimum of 3	Send all quotes to Purchasing for review/approval. After approval, create PO, sign PO, and send to vendor to place order
\$30,512+ (for SY24/25) <i>Note: Changes annually by MDE</i>	-	Formal bidding process performed by the Purchasing Department. Board approval is required.

All purchases must follow District purchasing policies. For any purchase exceeding \$5,000, a minimum of **three (3) quotes** is required. These quotes must be for the same items or services to allow for proper comparison (i.e., apples-to-apples).

Once quotes are obtained, all quotes must be submitted to the Purchasing Department for review and approval. This requirement applies to all purchases regardless of the purchasing method – whether using a purchasing card, check request, or other means. After approval from the Purchasing Department, a PO can be entered in AS400.

Cooperative Purchasing Groups & Consortium

A **Cooperative Purchasing Group** is a profit or non-profit business that serves members in a single industry. Co-op members play no role in the management of suppliers or contracts. Members can utilize any resulting contracts.

A **Consortium** is a formal organization, in which the members are active in the management of purchases. The member organizations conduct bids and proposals on behalf of the consortium. All members are then able to utilize the resulting contracts.

Chippewa Valley Schools participate in various cooperative purchasing groups and consortiums. These partnerships allow the District to piggyback on pre-solicited goods and services at contracted pricing.

In other words, items and services offered through these groups have already gone through the formal bidding process, eliminating the need to obtain additional quotes. Schools are strongly encouraged to purchase from vendors affiliated with these groups whenever possible.

Cooperative Purchasing Groups and Consortium CVS are Members:

- | | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|
| ✓ BuyBoard | ✓ MAC | ✓ OSCCN |
| ✓ Choice Partners | ✓ Macomb County Consortium | ✓ REMC |
| ✓ E & I Cooperative Services | of School Districts | ✓ Sourcewell |
| ✓ ESC 19 | ✓ MiDeal | ✓ TIPS |
| ✓ HPS | ✓ OMNIA Partners | |

Note: This list may not include all groups the District participates in. Please contact the Purchasing Department for additional information.

Check Requests

Check requests may be submitted for reimbursements to parents and community members for donations, PTO purchases, and fundraiser-related expenses. To initiate a reimbursement, the individual must first be set up as a parent vendor by contacting the building secretary.

Completed check request forms, along with all required documentation, should be submitted to the building secretary for processing. Reimbursements are processed through the Accounts Payable check runs or the Building Check runs. Payments are issued according to the respective check runs schedules.

[Check Request Form](#)

Employee Reimbursement / Mileage Reimbursement

Employee Reimbursement is used when staff members pay out-of-pocket for school-related purchases. Mileage reimbursement applies when employees incur travel expenses for school-related events.

Employee Reimbursement requires submission of **original** receipts and all relevant documentation, and both reimbursements require the appropriate reimbursement forms.

If staff members have both out-of-pocket expenses and mileage expenses, separate forms must be submitted for each type of reimbursement.

Reimbursements are processed and paid through the employees' paycheck, in accordance with the District's Reimbursement Schedule.

[Employee Reimbursement Form](#)

[Mileage Reimbursement Form](#)