



Purchasing & Contracting

Quick Guide to Buying

2025-2026

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Introduction

Buying Materials

This guide provides a general overview of purchasing goods at Portland Public Schools. Purchasing at Portland Public Schools is guided by PPS Public Contracting Rules, Oregon Revised Statutes, and (when federal money is spent) Federal Procurement Guidelines.

Portland Public Schools uses a mix of centralized and decentralized purchasing. This means that some buying decisions are made by central departments and others are made by schools and departments.

Key Departments

The departments below perform some centralized purchasing. Familiarize yourself with their role in buying processes.

- Purchasing & Contracting
 - <https://www.pps.net/Page/231>
 - Manages PPS Private Marketplace online ordering system
 - <https://www.pps.net/Page/1916>
 - Manages Amazon Business accounts
 - <https://www.pps.net/Page/13922>
 - Oversees the purchase of IT products
 - <https://www.pps.net/Page/9916>
 - Issues PCards and audits PCard transactions
 - Assists with PeopleSoft Financials purchase orders
 - Provides consultation on purchasing rules and methods
 - Office of Technology and Information Services
 - Defines Hardware Standards: <https://www.pps.net/Page/13815>
 - Reviews Digital Resources/learning technology:
<https://www.pps.net/Page/14073>
 - Instructional Resource Center
 - <https://www.pps.net/page/966>

- Purchases currently adopted curriculum and other instructional materials including Textbooks, Science Kits, Lit Sets, DVDs, Digital Streaming Media access
- Warehouse
 - <http://www.pps.net/Domain/199>
 - Provides some standardized District-wide materials such as COUM folders used to store student information at schools.

Competition Requirements When Purchasing Goods

Procurement Thresholds

Procurement thresholds dictate the level of competition required to buy what you want to buy based on the dollar amount you are spending. These thresholds are specific to the purchase of goods and very basic services:

- **Small Procurements**
 - \$0 - \$25,000
 - No competition required
 - Use your PCard when appropriate
 - Shop around
- **Intermediate Procurements**
 - \$25,000 - \$250,000
 - Three quotes required, scan and attach quotes or quote log to your purchase order or your PCard reconciliation
 - Board approval required prior to purchase for purchases exceeding \$150,000
- **Formal Procurements**
 - \$250,000 or greater
 - Formal procurement process led by Purchasing & Contracting department or approved exception required
 - Board approval prior to purchase is required

Procurement Threshold Exceptions

Exceptions to procurement thresholds/competition requirements exist. Generally, justifying use of an exception requires providing research and documentation to Purchasing & Contracting.

The most frequently referenced exceptions for goods include:

- PPS-47-0275 Sole-Source Procurements
 - When only a single supplier can fulfill your requirements. Preference for one product over another does not constitute an adequate sole-source justification.
- PPS-47-0288 Approved Class Special Procurements
 - Copyrighted Materials and Creative Works, an exemption that allows the purchase of copyrighted materials, including curriculum materials, art, or music, when available from only one source.
 - Purchase of Used Personal Property, allows Portland Public Schools to purchase used property or equipment without competition.
- Cooperative Contracts
 - Portland Public Schools can rely on contracts resulting from a formal solicitation issued by another public agency or cooperative procurement group instead of seeking our own competition. Cooperative contracts are frequently used for purchasing goods such as technology, supplies, and furniture items. For more information, please see our website: <https://www.pps.net/Page/1873>

Methods of Purchasing Goods

PeopleSoft Purchase Orders

A purchase order is an ordering document issued by Purchasing & Contracting to a supplier that specifies material or simple services, quantities, and agreed upon pricing. Once accepted by the supplier, a purchase order acts as a binding contract.

Purchase orders are typically used for technology with defined standards, materials not available through Private Marketplace, software and digital resources such as apps used in classrooms, items that are manufactured according to detailed specification such as classroom chairs, and purchases which require terms and conditions for District protection such as purchase of heavy-duty machinery.

Purchasing & Contracting can enter your purchase order for you. Please see our website for more information: <https://www.pps.net/Page/1888>

Information Technology Purchasing

To purchase IT Hardware please review the list of standards available on the Information Technology website: <https://www.pps.net/Page/9916>. Standard hardware covers computers, laptops, Chromebooks, monitors, and many accessories.

After you have determined what you would like to order, use the PPS Support Portal (<https://support.pps.net/>) to submit an IT Purchasing request. Ensure that all information is included in your IT Purchasing request.

PCards

PCards are used to purchase many items such as supplies, equipment, and materials. PCard policies are strictly enforced so be familiar with these before using your PCard. Please note that some departments have identified purchasing standards or processes which you must adhere to (e.g., OTIS hardware standards governing technology items). Please see the PCard website for additional information: <http://www.pps.net/Page/1317>

Contact Us

Our hope is that you will find many answers to your buying questions in this guide. If you need additional guidance, feel free to [contact us](#).

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