



OSP Policies

COOPERATIVE PROCUREMENT – SCHOOL DISTRICTS

The Office of State Procurement (OSP) has authority over the procurement practices of State Agencies only. One of OSP's primary functions is to research frequently purchased items and items where the formulation of a Statewide contract would bring the best value to the State. Arkansas Public Schools are allowed by law to purchase off these Statewide contracts, but are not required to do so.

School districts function under separate laws, ACA §6-21-301 thru §6-21-306, which give authority to their respective school boards. What a school can do in the procurement arena depends on these laws and the guidelines and authority formulated by its school board.

If a school is approached by a vendor who has a contract with a Cooperative Entity (such as US Communities, TIPS/TAPS, NJPA, NIPA, etc.), its administration should review the contract to see if it meets that school district's procurement requirements and provides the best value. If the Cooperative's process meets these requirements, then it may be used by the school district.

Cooperative agreements should not be used just for convenience. A school district should determine whether a particular Cooperative contract provides the best value to the buying entity. If not, the buying entity should issue its own solicitation.

If OSP approves a specific contract that was solicited by a Cooperative, the approval is only for that particular contract, and not for all contracts awarded by the Cooperative. In other words, it is not a blanket approval for all contracts awarded by that particular Cooperative. When OSP approves a particular Cooperative contract, it will be posted on the OSP website under Statewide Contracts.