

# Purchasing FAQ

- 1) How do I buy materials for my classroom?
  - a. Find the thing you want to buy and tell your Office Manager.
  - b. Please see the Purchasing Manual for all purchasing information: [Purchasing Manual](#).
- 2) Do I need a special account to buy things?
  - a. Most teachers have a “classroom budget” if what you want is more than you have in that budget, you will need to get someone, usually your principal, to approve using other funds
- 3) What if my principal doesn’t have money for me to use?
  - a. You might be able to get approval from another department if you can justify the expenditure, but you need to seek approval BEFORE buying anything.
- 4) I heard petty cash is not available anymore, is that true?
  - a. Technically no. Sites are given about \$50 per quarter but petty cash should not be used to circumvent the purchase order process. Here is the memo on [Petty Cash](#). Please check with your Office Manager if you have questions.
- 5) Can I buy perishable things, like produce?
  - a. Yes, BUT you should talk to your Office Manager first. Perishable items are approved for use in science labs and culinary classes. Options for these purchases would include a use of store card for Vons/Albertsons or Ralphs or a blanket PO with Smart & Final if your school has one.
- 6) What’s a Blanket PO?
  - a. A blanket PO is a recurring PO without receiving used with very limited number of vendors (see page 44 of the [Purchasing Manual](#)).
- 7) What stores do we have a Blanket PO with?
  - a. Your school may have a blanket PO for Smart & Final and/or one of the local grocery store, store cards. Please check with your Office Manager.
- 8) Who are vendors we can use to purchase products with a PO?
  - a. Here is a link to the list of [ALL vendors](#).
- 9) Can I buy things on Amazon?
  - a. Yes, but you need to keep some things in mind: (see [Purchasing Manual](#) page 13-14, N. Amazon Business Prime).
  - b. Choose “Prime” whenever possible.
  - c. Look for “Shipped and Sold” or “Fulfilled” by Amazon. Amazon supports all these purchases, if something is lost in shipment or arrives damaged, they will credit or send a replacement right away. Amazon does not support third party vendors who sell products through Amazon, so this makes it difficult when a problem arises.

- d. If it is not, look for a US vendor with 4-5 Star Reviews, preferably with thousands of positive reviews (90% or higher).
- e. Do not use your personal Amazon account.
- f. All purchases must be shipped to a District address.

10) Is there an easy way for me to let my office manager know exactly what to buy on Amazon?

- a. Yes! You can create a shopping list and share it with them so they get exactly what you want. [HERE](#) are the directions on how to do that.

11) I heard we cannot order things from Amazon close to a school break, is that true?

- a. Yes, Amazon drivers still deliver packages to schools when they are closed. Purchasing has tried to stop this, but it still happens, and packages go missing. In order to avoid this, orders are not released 3-5 days prior to a break. If there is an emergency need your Office Manager can reach out to Purchasing and we will try to help push through the approval process as quickly as possible.

12) Why do there need to be so many people approving my purchase?

- a. The budget account being used determines how many approvals a purchase requisition goes through before the PO prints. Some accounts require approval from Technology Services, Instructional Services, Special Ed, and/or EL Services, so this does add to the approval process/time.

13) What if other people need to approve my purchase and it's taking forever?

- a. Have your Office Manager email the person(s) that needs to do the approving. Everything is in Escape and they can see who still needs to approve the purchase.

14) When is the ordering deadline for the end of the year?

- a. Usually, it is at the end of March or early April.

15) Why is the deadline so early?

- a. Purchasing and Fiscal need time to finalize all purchases before your school site closes for summer break. All POs need to be completed on or before June 30<sup>th</sup>.

16) What if I need to purchase things for the end of the year or next year?

- a. You will need to make plans early to purchase things before the end of the year purchasing deadline.
- b. If orders are needed for the next school year, let your Office Manager know so they can place orders when they return in August and the new fiscal year budget is available. There are a few exceptions, such as software renewals due in July, where a PO can be entered in mid-June.