



**WOODRIDGE**  
SCHOOL DISTRICT 68

# memo

To: The Board of Education and Dr. Patrick Broncato, Superintendent  
From: Curt Saindon, Assistant Superintendent for Business Services/CSBO  
Kyle Hansen, Director of Buildings and Grounds  
Date: September 19, 2025  
Subject: Illinois Together Purchasing Cooperative

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The Illinois Association of School Business Officials, with help from Bespoke Community Cooperatives, is starting up a new and unique purchasing cooperative designed specifically for Illinois school districts. All Illinois school districts are bound by the Illinois School Code, and all related legislation, guidelines and regulations, in determining when and how to bid out for various goods and services publicly. The Illinois School Code also outlines what types of goods and services are exempt from bidding, but school districts always have the option of completing the public, sealed bid process for the purchase of any goods and services, as desired. There is also guidance in the Illinois Governmental Joint Purchasing Act and the Illinois Governmental Cooperation Act regarding how purchasing cooperatives can be used among governmental bodies in Illinois for the benefit of those governmental bodies and the taxpayers they represent. We are currently a member of one regional purchasing cooperative and two national purchasing cooperatives; however, this is the first purchasing cooperative developed by and designed explicitly for Illinois school districts.

There are 852 school districts in Illinois, as well as several other educational joint agreements, and we literally complete thousands of bids collectively each year, many for the same goods and services. The notion behind the Illinois Together Purchasing Cooperative would be for school districts to submit bids to the cooperative (Bespoke) as they are planning to go out to bid, allow for Bespoke to edit and modify the bid (and add in some appropriate purchasing cooperative language) so that the results can be scalable (and the winning contract available) to other school districts who are part of the cooperative. We can streamline the process, eliminate each of us completing dozens of duplicative bids each year, realize economies of scale through our collective purchasing power, and get better contract terms and pricing. There would be no cost to join the cooperative, and no obligation to use the cooperative if you found better pricing or terms on your own, or if you wanted to use a different process for a particular good or service. It is another tool in our toolkit to help ensure that we are good stewards of taxpayer dollars and operate as efficiently as possible.



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Bespoke Community Cooperatives is not a purchasing cooperative itself, but rather an organization that helps purchasing cooperatives organize, grow and develop over time. They provide marketing to potential members, they assist in completing the bidding process in a cooperative environment, they provide a structure to manage the contracts approved by the cooperative and they provide data and analytics to both show how well the cooperative is being used and how the contracts in place can be leveraged to the members' benefit. They receive a small commission for their services, as does the IASBO organization for marketing and program support. Finally, if any school districts submit their bids as part of the evolution and growth of the purchasing cooperative, and those bids result in a master contract being developed and offered to other cooperative members, then that school district would also get a small commission for all of the business generated by participating cooperative members in that master contract...so our school district could make a little money to help offset the cost of our efforts and to recognize the benefit and value we are bringing to the cooperative. As the cooperative is just starting, there are only three contracts in place right now, one for copiers and two for copy paper. Still, I expect that over the next few years, several more contracts will be established as participating members submit bids for consideration through the cooperative.

As I mentioned earlier, there is no cost to join and no obligation to use the cooperative for any particular contracts if you don't want to. All they ask is that we (ideally, the Board, but that is not a legal requirement) approve the Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) and the Master Intergovernmental Contract Purchasing Agreement and allow the Administration to register as a member through Bespoke and Illinois Together. That would ensure that we agree to the terms and bylaws of the purchasing cooperative and it allows us access to the master contracts that are approved and put in place through the cooperative. It would also allow us to submit bids for consideration to the cooperative and potentially develop master contracts as a result of our bidding process, whereby we could realize a commission on any/all of our master contracts.

With the support of the Board, I would hope to bring a recommendation to the Board in October to join the cooperative. Then, as we develop bid specs and bid documents over the years, for goods or services that might be of value to other school district/purchasing cooperative members, we could submit those to Bespoke and IL Together for consideration. I have already identified several potential bids that we might want to post through IL Together in hopes of eventually developing a master contract and potentially realizing some commissions for our time and effort (that we would already be undertaking anyway, as we were bidding this out good or service ourselves). As always, please let me know if you have any questions or need additional information. Thank you.