



TORNILLO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Finance Services

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Board of Trustees
From: Luis Guerra, Finance Director
Subject: Purchasing Cooperatives 2025-2026
Date: September 30, 2025

HISTORY:

School districts are authorized to use purchasing cooperatives by the Texas Education Code, and as a local government entity by the Texas Local Government Code.

The Texas Education Code, Section 44.031, authorizes districts to enter into interlocal agreements with other government entities, including purchasing cooperatives that are managed by a government entity, for aggregate purchases of \$50,000 or more, instead of using competitive bidding. An interlocal agreement is a contract between a local government such as a school district and another local government, a state agency, or another state, that can be used to procure goods or services.

The Texas Local Government Code, Section 271.102, authorizes a local government, including a school district, to participate in a cooperative purchasing program with a local government or cooperative organization of Texas or another state. By doing so, a local government entity automatically satisfies any requirement to seek competitive bidding.

The Texas Business Organizations Code, Chapter 251, mandates that to use the term cooperative or any abbreviation thereof (e.g., coop, co-op) in its name, or advertise or present itself as conducting business on a cooperative basis, an organization must remit any proceeds back to member parties. As members, districts receive a portion of the organization's net savings commensurate with the amount purchased for that year.

School districts may join cooperative purchasing organizations, typically free of charge, although some charge a membership fee. Cooperatives also assess fees to vendors, based on a percentage of each sale. Some Regional Education Service Centers operate purchasing cooperatives, which are available to districts inside and outside the center's region. The Comptroller of Public Accounts also manages the State of Texas CO-OP Purchasing Program, which school districts can join.

RATIONALE

Tornillo Independent School District uses many cooperative purchasing alliances to procure goods and services. Utilizing these cooperatives allows the District to benefit from combined purchasing power while still following state and federal law and District policy.



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TISD commonly uses the following purchasing cooperatives:

DIR - Department of Information Resources

EPISD – El Paso Independent School District

GPA1- Government Procurement Alliance

Region 4 – TCPN -NIPA-OMNIA

Region 8 – TIPS - TIPN

Region 17 - West Texas Cooperative

Region 19 - Allied Cooperative Purchasing

SISD - Socorro Independent School District

TASB – Texas Association of School Boards Systems – Buy Board

Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts – TEX Smart Buy

TREA RMC – Texas Rural Education Association Risk Management Cooperative

YISD - Ysleta Independent School District

Region 4 – Operation Connectivity

Property Casualty Alliance of Texas

Sourcewell Cooperative

Region 16

Sole Source:

CIS - Communities in Schools

BUDGET IMPACT

Purchasing cooperatives are funded through fees paid by vendors, and sometimes by members.

ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATION

Administration is requesting approval to continue using these purchasing cooperatives.