Happy December!

It's somewhat hard to believe that we're almost at the halfway mark for the 2019 - 2020 school year. We are excited to be able to use this newsletter as another platform to provide useful information to you on a monthly basis. We would love to have your input and/or suggestions as to information or topics specifically that you would like to see in upcoming editions.

Wishing each of you an amazing winter break!
School Procurement Officer Notes and Reminders:

- Please be sure to consult your Purchasing Request Workflow, especially for purchases that exceed $5,000, and for technology requests and/or contracts.

- Reminder: Work with your Principal/Director to ensure that staff members are properly delegated and trained to make purchases in order to avoid unauthorized purchases and procurement violations. Be sure to update this information with our Purchasing Division as needed and especially when new employees who will make purchases join your team.

- Workflow meetings will resume in January. I will be sure to send out correspondence to have them scheduled.

- You will receive a survey within the week that will request information about your school/department's copiers. We are in the beginning stages of facilitating a Copier and Multi-Function Printers (MFP) and Procurement Optimization Report and will need your help. The link will include detailed instructions and other pertinent info.

Important Payroll Info:

PAY DATES:

DECEMBER 13, 2019: FOR TEMPS AND SUBS

DECEMBER 31, 2019: FOR ALL EMPLOYEES

TRANSACTION ENTRY FOR EXCEPTIONS - DUE DECEMBER 16, 2019

JANUARY 31, 2020 ONLY (NO JANUARY MID-MONTH PAY)

THE 2020 PAYROLL DEADLINE CALENDAR IS IN THE WORKS, AND WE EXPECT TO DISTRIBUTE IT LATER THIS MONTH.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!
-PAYROLL STAFF
As of September 24, 2019 Local Government and Schools have the option to utilize one of five Temporary Staffing Services (non-professional) contracts when hiring a temporary worker through a temp agency. Click here for pricing and contact information. If you choose not to use these awarded contracts, you will have to follow procurement practices to procure services and remain in compliance with the regulations (remember your Purchasing E-Z Guide).

The five companies were awarded term contracts for temporary non-professional staffing services, some how-to’s are noted below:

- Start with the lowest price for your labor category and ask for a candidate, the first firm has four hours to respond with an answer as to availability.
- If the first firm cannot provide a suitable candidate, move to the next lowest company for your labor category and so forth until a suitable candidate is provided.

NOTE: If the classification you are looking for is not listed, procurement rules apply and quotes must be sought (contact purchasing with any questions).

- Submit a requisition in BSO for a purchase order to encumber the estimated funds for the temp, make sure to detail the breakdown of the encumbrance in the notes section (i.e. estimated hours multiplied by the hourly rate). Additionally, state in the notes section that your department has verified pricing.

Please contact Purchasing if you have any questions. purchasing@albemarle.org

Note for schools: To get to the purchasing SharePoint site put in your domain before your login – schls\ Purchasing SharePoint Site
FIELD TRIPS AND PROCUREMENT

Field trips used to be exciting times for me back when I was in public school and I'm sure that it remains the same for kids today. I have seen quite a few questions lately regarding upcoming field trips and how to remain compliant with the procurement regulations. The following guidance is provided to help plan your next trip in such a manner as to avoid potential problems.

Remember from your procurement training that it does not make any difference where the funds are coming from, it doesn't relieve you of public procurement responsibilities if you, or anyone employed by the ACPS system is making the arrangements. Even when parents are paying, fundraising efforts are being conducted, or a non-school organization is providing funds, if school employees are planning or acquiring services, the Procurement Manual applies to the purchase or purchases.

You may procure an agency or specialty organization to provide a package quote, be your own travel agent, or work with a hybrid combination of methods to meet the needs to arrange venues, travel, accommodations, and meals. Just remember the following points:

- Any procurement that exceeds $5,000 falls under the requirement for competitive procurement unless there is an exception that excuses it from this requirement, i.e. sole source.

- If you believe that any part of the need is justified as a sole source procurement, you must submit a sole source request, on the appropriate form (available on the Purchasing SharePoint site) for approval and public posting. The public posting must be out for 10 calendar days before the purchase can be made.
FIELD TRIPS AND PROCUREMENT (continued)

- You will most likely be working under small purchase procedures (purchase not to exceed $100,000) and such purchases are typically awarded to the lowest priced offeror.

- It is important that all offerors are quoting on the same terms – you must provide thorough details communicated the same to all offerors. If you fail to be clear, you may receive quotes from different offerors offering different products or services.

- If you cannot describe your needs in exact terms and based on the same products and services by all offerors, you must seek guidance from Purchasing in a timely manner to properly procure the needs by means that will allow evaluation based on price and other factors. Such procurements must be solicited and evaluated in accordance with the proper guidelines or risk lengthy delays due to protests from disappointed offerors. In this type of procurement, award may be made to other than the lowest priced offeror when properly solicited and evaluated.

This is just a broad brush stroke at explaining all that may be involved. There can be a lot of details to discuss to get this done right, particularly when you are seeking to award a contract to other than the lowest priced offeror. I encourage each of you to seek guidance from Purchasing early in your planning process to avoid delays when you are facing deadlines. We can be reached at 296-5854 and will be glad to help.
We have rolled out Amazon Prime Business for Albemarle County Public Schools. Anyone with ordering capabilities will be required to sign a certification that will be sent out soon with the Regulations and Procedures. We had great participation in the training webinar and look forward to this providing your school/department with some great benefits. If you were unable to attend the webinar training (which will be required to place an order on the account), you can find it here: Amazon Business Webinar Training

We will be rolling out the Requisitioner training soon for each school and school department. As always, if you have questions about the Amazon Prime Business Account, please do not hesitate to contact us.
Treasury Updates

Gift Card Purchases - Prohibited

Gift card purchases are prohibited per our P-Card agreement. The P-Card agreement that all P-Card holders are required to sign includes in Section 1, language which prohibits the use of a P-Card “for alcohol, gambling or obtaining cash”, as gift cards are a cash substitute. This email is to clarify that language. We are in the process of revising the P-Card agreements and procedures to make our P-Card program more understandable and less subject to interpretation.

This is a reminder that the purchase of gift cards is strictly prohibited because:

- Gift cards, like cash, can be easily lost or stolen,
- Gift cards distributed to an employee must be included in that employee’s income (see below), and The County cannot determine what the gift cards were spent on, and thus cannot determine if the purchase was a proper use of the citizens’ resources.
- Gift cards given to employees must be included in the employee’s income because the IRS considers gift cards items that can be easily exchanged for cash, and thus must be included in taxable wages no matter how small. (26 CFR 1.132-6(2)(c); IRS Publication 15-B, Employer’s Tax Guide to Fringe Benefits, page 9.) Thus the Financial Management Team is responsible for manually tracking gift cards, determining their use, and if given to employees, including them into taxable wages – all of which are manual activities that create inefficiencies.

Effective immediately, any purchases of gift cards can result in your removal from the P-Card program (P-Card cancelled, removal from the Works system, etc.). If you are the holder of a departmental P-Card, it is your responsibility to inquire what the employee will purchase, and ensure that it will not be for the purchase of gift cards.

The Financial Management Team is investigating other services and products to offer an alternative for the prohibited practice of giving gift cards. We hope to report back to you about our findings near the end of this fiscal year.
What should you do if you have questions or need more info?

So glad you asked! If you have questions that you would like to have answered in next month's publication and/or a specific topic you would like to have addressed in next month's publication, click here to submit your question(s) and/or request(s).

Need more immediate assistance? Don't hesitate to contact any of the persons / departments listed below for your specific needs.

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School Procurement Officer - 434-296-5820  
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Purchasing Division - 434-296-5854  
Tom Winder, Purchasing Agent  
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Fiscal Services - 434-296-5829  
Jackson Zimmerman, School Finance Officer  
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Jill Preddy  
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