



Procurement Services
Central Services Facility

TO: All District Staff
THRU: Sherri-Mathews Hazel, CPA *Sherri Mathews Hazel*
Chief Financial Officer
FROM: Carolyn Leigh Hodges *Carolyn Leigh Hodges*
Director, Procurement, Printing, and Warehouse Services
DATE: December 11, 2025
SUBJECT: Ratification SOP

Effective immediately, the attached Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for ratifications is in effect. Please review the updated procedures.

Ratifications are unauthorized or noncompliant procurements where goods or services are received without a valid purchase order or executed contract. Procurement has established a formal standard operating procedure for the ratification process. This process ensures fiscal accountability, policy adherence, and appropriate disciplinary action. The immediate supervisor of the employee responsible for the violation will be accountable for documenting and enforcing the appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with the matrix below.

Disciplinary Guidance Matrix

Tier	Action	Criteria
Tier 1	Conference with employee and written follow-up in supervisory file	First-time violation; unavoidable circumstances (e.g., vendor error); emergency situations (Not due to late requisitions entry)
Tier2	Letter redirection (copy to HR file); recommendation for training	Second violation within fiscal year; retraining recommended; mitigating or aggravating circumstances documented
Tier3	Referral to HR for disciplinary action	Third violation within fiscal year; assess repayment of costs and suspension of Munis access; document all circumstances

The goal is to support a consistent, compliant, and efficient approach to ratifications across the organization. The Procurement Office is here to assist with these updated procedures. If you have any questions, need clarification, or would like guidance on how the changes may affect your workflow, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Approved by:



Todd A. Walker, J.D., Ph.D.
Superintendent

Richland County School District Operating Procedure (SOP)

- **SOP Title:** Ratifications Process
- **Department/Division:** Procurement Services
- **Prepared by:** Director of Procurement
- **Approved by:** Chief Financial Officer

****Adoption date and revised dates will be in the footer.***

1. Purpose

To establish procedures for ratifying unauthorized or noncompliant procurements and applying appropriate disciplinary measures to ensure fiscal accountability and policy adherence.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to any department, school, or staff member requesting payment for goods or services received without proper authorization, a valid purchase order, or an executed contract.

3. Roles:

Title	Description of the Role	Role (RASCI)
Chief Financial Officer	Oversight	A-LPC
Director of Procurement	Superintendent's appointed designee	R
Procurement Official	Prepares documents	R
Executive Directors	Reviews circumstances and disciplinary recommendation, if necessary	A, R
Administrator/ Supervisor	Prepares documents and makes disciplinary recommendation	R
Staff Member	Notifies leadership of need for ratification	R
Accounts Payable	Processes ratification payment	I

4. Definitions (if applicable)

Ratification: The process that remedies unauthorized or illegal procurements as defined in the District Procurement Code.

Adopted and Revised 12/16/2025

Expenditure Request: Form used by Financial Services to provide a budget code so that payments can be made.

5. Procedure

#	Description of the Step	Person Responsible (R) and (where needed) Accountable (A)	Person(s) Supporting (S), Consulting (C), and Informing (I)
1	Staff identifies purchase made without appropriate authority after receiving goods or invoices for services without a valid purchase order / other valid contract.	Staff with procurement functions within Department/School (R) Administrator/Supervisor (A)	S, C, I Procurement Services
2	Prepare an expenditure request with the appropriate budget code for submission with a ratification packet and attach the invoice.	Staff with procurement functions within Department/School (R) Administrator/Supervisor (A)	S, C, I Procurement Services, Direct Supervisor
3	Submit request and invoice to Supervisor / Principal.	Staff with procurement functions within Department/School (R) Administrator/Supervisor (A)	S,C Procurement Services
4	Prepare a memo regarding the ratification circumstances to include the supervisor's disciplinary action according to the Disciplinary Guidance Matrix.	Administrator/Supervisor (R), Executive Director or Chief (A)	S,C Procurement Services
5	For school based personnel, submit expenditure request to Executive Director for signature. ED will review memo and disciplinary action, sign, and return to requestor. Department level personnel, submit to Chief for signature. Chief will review memo and possible	Executive Director or Chief (R)	S, C Procurement Services

	disciplinary action and return to requestor.		
6	Submit memo, expenditure request, and invoice to Procurement@richlandone.org .	Staff with procurement functions within Department/School (R)	A, S, C Executive Director, Director of Procurement
7	Prepare a Determination of Appropriateness and Letter of Ratification to include disciplinary recommendation.	Procurement Official (R),	A, S, C Director of Procurement
8	Send the packet with letter, determination, memo, expenditure request, and invoice to Director of Procurement for signature.	Procurement Official (R)	A, S, C Director of Procurement
9	Sign letter as designee of the Superintendent.	Director of Procurement (as Chief Procurement Officer) (R)	S, C, I Superintendent, Chief Financial Officer
10	Return signed packet to Procurement Official.	Director of Procurement (R)	S, C, I Chief Financial Officer
11	Add information regarding ratification to the tracking log and save a copy in the shared file according to the naming convention.	Procurement Official (R)	S, C, I Chief Financial Officer, Payroll and Accounts Payable Manager
12	Submit ratification packet in its entirety to the Accounts Payable Supervisor who will attach the document to the payment in MUNIS.	Procurement Official (R)	S, C, I Director of Procurement, Chief Financial Officer, Accounts Payable Manager

6. Disciplinary Guidance Matrix

Tier	Action	Criteria
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		emergency situations (not due to late requisition entry)
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Note: Violations are cumulative. Mitigating and aggravating factors must be documented in the Ratification Memo.

7. Safety and Compliance

This procedure complies with the following board policies:

- Richland One Board Policy AR DP-R Contractual Agreements
- Procurement Code, R2015 Unauthorized or Illegal Procurements

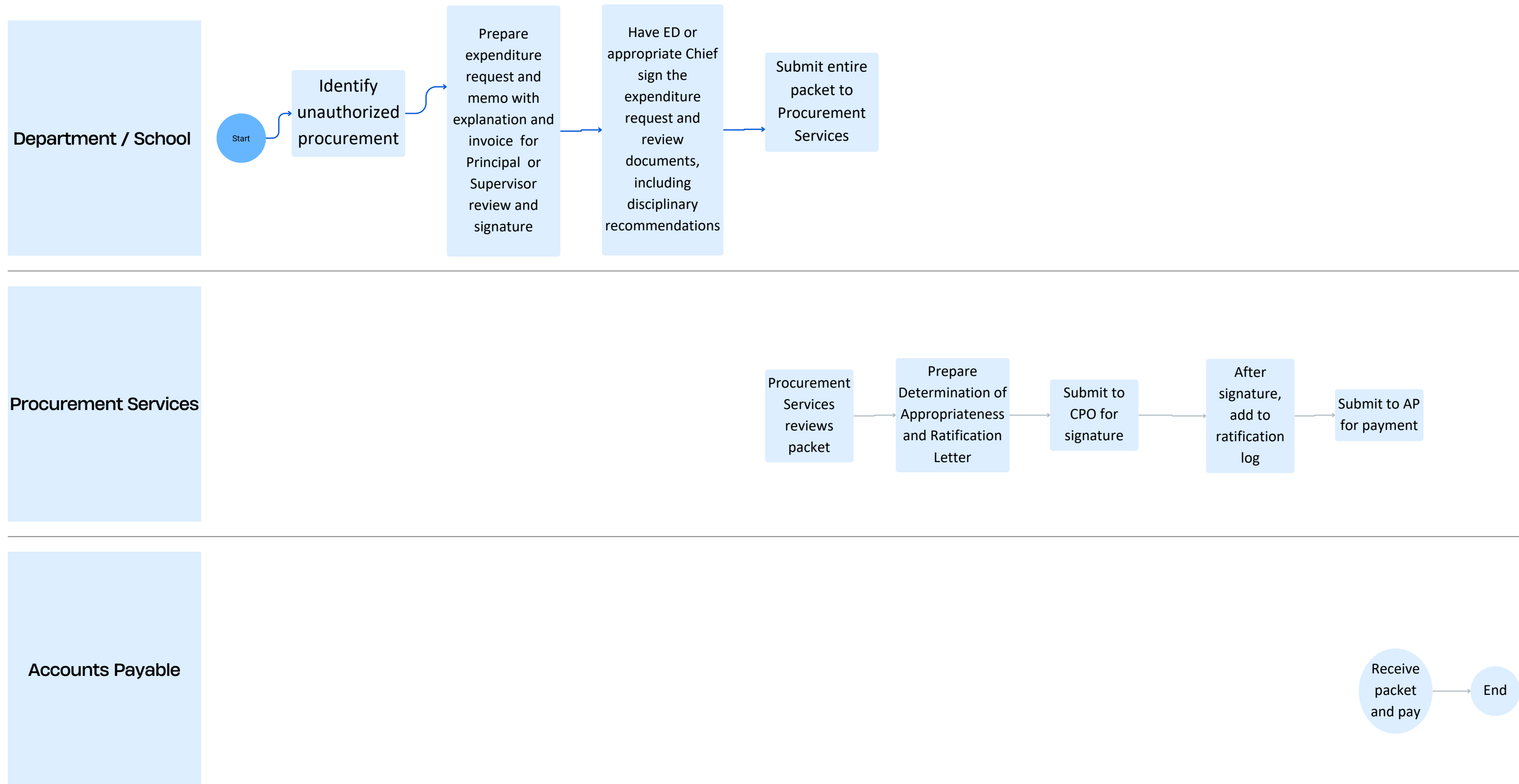
8. Related Documents and References

- Template
- Expenditure Request [EXPENDITUREREQUESTFORM_1.pdf](#)
- Determination of Appropriateness
- Ratification Letter
- Disciplinary Guidance Matrix
- Tracking Log

9. Recordkeeping Requirements

Procurement Services retains a copy of the ratification packet in the shared network location and forwards the original to Accounts Payable for prompt payment. Financial records are retained for a seven-year period.

Ratifications Process Map





Procurement Services Guideline, Ratifications

Please see the following example documentation packet below. If you have additional questions regarding the ratification process, please contact your Buyer. The ratification packet is available on the Procurement Services webpage.

Example Memo: Prepared by Principal or Department Head addressed to the Director of Procurement Services



TO: Carolyn Leigh Hodges
Director of Procurement, Warehouse, and Printing Services

FROM: (Department Head's Name)
(Title)

DATE: (Date of memo submission)

SUBJECT: Letter of Ratification for (Vendor name)

In the body of the memo explain the following:

- Detail what service(s)/ item(s) the vendor provided
- Explanation as to why procurement code was not followed
- Explain supervisor's disciplinary action according to the Disciplinary Guidance Matrix and steps to prevent reoccurrence
- Request for payment and the amount

cc:

Enclosures



Procurement Services Guideline, Ratifications

Example Richland County School District One Expenditure Request

**RICHLAND COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT ONE
 EXPENDITURE REQUEST**

**TO: FINANCIAL SERVICES
 ACCOUNTS PAYABLE**

FROM: _____

DATE: _____

1. PLEASE PAY TO:

NAME: _____

Invoice No. _____

ADDRESS: _____

2. THE AMOUNT AND EXPENDITURE INFORMATION IS AS FOLLOWS:

ORG.	OBJECT	PROJECT		AMOUNT
TOTAL				

3. **FOR:** _____

REQUESTED BY: _____

APPROVED BY: _____



Procurement Services Guideline, Ratifications

Example Form: Determination of Appropriateness

(Determination of Appropriateness to Ratify or Terminate an Unauthorized Procurement)

(Completed by Procurement Only)



DETERMINATION OF APPROPRIATENESS

**DETERMINATION OF APPROPRIATENESS TO RATIFY OR TERMINATE AN
UNAUTHORIZED PROCUREMENT**

A Request has been made by:

School/Department:

Vendor/Contractor

Amount:

The Procurement Officer has reviewed and determined that the statement(s) checked below are true:

The goods or services are needed by the District and are an allowable Procurement Code and the price is determined to be fair and reasonable.

The obligation created by the unauthorized procurement is in the best interest of the District.

The vendor is not listed on the suspended/debarred list.

All required documentation and approvals necessary to make the procurement have been obtained in addition to a properly executed Expenditure Request Form.

The Responsible Party (Department) is complete and properly executed, and approval is signed by Principal/Department Head. Memorandum shall include the corrective action to be taken to prevent recurrence and any action(s) to be taken against the individual who committed the act.

Additional Information regarding purchase.

_____ Date

_____ Procurement Officer

cc: Purchasing file



Procurement Services Guideline, Ratifications

**Example Form: Determination of Appropriateness
(Ratification Letter)**

(Completed by Procurement Only)



To: Dr. Craig Witherspoon, Superintendent

From: LaShonda Outing, Director
Procurement and Warehouse Services

Date:

Re: **Unauthorized Purchase requiring Ratification**

Vendor Name:

Amount: \$

Responsible Party (School/Department):

It has been determined that a District employee (Responsible Party) has made an unauthorized award of a contract or that a contract award is otherwise in violation of District procurement rules and regulations.

The Board has delegated the authority to ratify such acts to the Superintendent, or in his absence or at his direction, the Chief Operations Officer.

As the designated head of the Procurement and Warehouse Services department my recommended disposition and corrective action of the unauthorized purchase is as follows:

Disposition:

- Ratify the contract.

An investigation by the Procurement Officer has determined that there is a need for the goods/services and the price offered is considered to be fair and reasonable and in the best interest of the District. Payment may be made to the vendor/contractor.

- Terminate the contract.

Contract has been determined to be a violation of law and recipient of contract acted fraudulently or in bad faith. Contract shall be declared null and void. In the event of termination, the Procurement Officer shall comply with the provisions set forth in the State Procurement Regulations §19-445.2015. Payment is not to be made to the vendor/contractor.

Corrective Action:

- No disciplinary or pecuniary action against the responsible employee is needed.

Employee and supervisor will receive a copy of this notification informing them that future unauthorized purchases may result in disciplinary action, which may include, being held financially responsible for the purchase.

- Disciplinary or pecuniary action against the responsible employee is recommended.

A corrective action plan is attached describing measures to prevent recurrence and the action to be taken against the employee who committed the act. Justification is attributed to the seriousness of the violation or a history of multiple infractions on file.

Approval:

Superintendent (Designee)

Date

Please return the entire package to the Procurement Services department for distribution.

Attachment(s): Determination of Appropriateness

cc: Ratification File

Memorandum, Purchase Ratification, Rev. 1, 01-26-16