

MARE/MO K-8 Fall Conference 2026 “Forever Rural”

**Cooperative Purchasing: A Tool to
Save Time and Money**

Presentation Outline

- Procurement Challenges Facing Schools
- What Is Cooperative Purchasing?
- Benefits of Cooperative Purchasing
- Understanding Myths of Cooperatives
- Basic Procurement Workflow for Cooperative
- Helpful Procurement Resources
- Key Takeaways
- Wrap up and Contact

Procurement Challenges Facing Schools

-  Limited staff and purchasing expertise
-  Increasing purchasing complexity & compliance requirements
-  Growing instructional costs combined with need to maximize resources for students
-  Expiration of federal relief funding  State/local funding uncertainty
 - <https://abc17news.com/news/education/2026/06/23/missouri-school-districts-facing-state-budget-cuts-ahead-of-the-2026-27-school-year/>
 - <https://www.stlpr.org/government-politics-issues/2026-01-07/missouri-tax-cuts-budget-outlook>
 - <https://www.stlpr.org/education/2026-05-07/missouri-school-officials-worried-about-tight-budgets-without-a-fully-funded-education-formula>
 - <https://www.rgsd.k12.mo.us/o/moecc/article/3020096>

What Is Cooperative Purchasing?

- Definition
 - A procurement method that allows agencies to purchase through contracts that have already been competitively solicited and awarded.
 - Sometimes called “Piggybacking”

Benefits of Cooperative Purchasing

-  **Save Money**
 - Access competitively negotiated pricing and favorable contract terms.
-  **Save Time**
 - Reduce time spent developing and administering bids.
-  **Support Compliance**
 - Utilize contracts that have already undergone a competitive procurement process.
-  **Expand Options**
 - Gain access to a wider network of vendors and solutions.
-  **Focus on Students**
 - Spend less time on procurement and more time supporting educational goals.

Understanding Myths of Cooperatives

Myth Busters

Handout - PDF

Basic Procurement Workflow for Cooperative

- **Step 1**
 -  Identify a Need
- **Step 2**
 -  Search Available Contracts
- **Step 3**
 -  Review Scope & Pricing
- **Step 4**
 -  Compliance Checklist
 -  Verify Contract Eligibility
 -  State Statute Missouri Revised Statutes §34.046
 -  Review District Purchasing Policy
 -  Confirm Competitive Solicitation
 -  Maintain Procurement Records
- **Step 5**
 -  Obtain Approvals
- **Step 6**
 -  Issue Purchase Order

Helpful Procurement Resources

-  Missouri Office of Administration Procurement Resources
-  School District Procurement Policies
-  Legal Counsel & Board Policy Guidance
-  Professional Purchasing Networks
-  Cooperative Purchasing Websites
-  Procurement Training Opportunities
-  Checklist Document – PDF Handout

Key Takeaways

-  Cooperative purchasing can save time
-  Cooperative purchasing can save money
-  Cooperative purchasing can support compliance
-  Documentation remains critical
-  Local policy always matters
-  Know where your money goes

Wrap up and Contact

- Final thoughts
- Questions and comments

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