Request for Proposal

# Purchasing Card Program

Bismarck Public Schools
Bismarck, North Dakota

November 2026

BISMARCK PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Bismarck Public Schools prohibits discrimination and harassment based on a student's, parent's, guardian's, or employee's race, color, religion, sex, gender identity, national origin, ancestry, disability, age, or other status protected by law. The District also provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups, as required by federal law.

1. **Invitation and Purpose**
   Bismarck Public Schools (BPS) invites qualified financial institutions and card program providers to submit proposals for a comprehensive purchasing card (P-Card) program. The District seeks competitive financial returns, secure controls, efficient reconciliation, strong service, and a comprehensive implementation and transition plan. This solicitation concerns purchasing card services only and does not require transfer of District deposit accounts.

2. **District Profile and Baseline**
   Estimated annual purchasing card expenditures: approximately $13,000,000. This estimate is provided for proposal development only and does not guarantee future transaction volume. BPS currently participates in the North Dakota Office of Management and Budget purchasing card program.

3. **Scope of Services**
   A. Provide physical and optional virtual purchasing cards
   B. Card issuance and cancellation
   C. Configurable per transaction, and monthly limits
   D. Merchant-category controls
   E. Real-time alerts and suspension
   F. Role-based administration
   G. Transaction exports
   H. Fraud detection, zero-liability terms where applicable, dispute and chargeback support
   I. Monthly statements
   J. Administrator training
   K. Dedicated implementation and ongoing service support.

4. **Financial Proposal Requirements**
   A. Specify guaranteed rebate rates, eligible spend definitions, exclusions, tiers, payment timing, minimum spend thresholds, annual or one-time fees, card replacement fees, late fees, interest or financing charges, foreign transaction charges, and all other costs.
   B. Explain whether any deposit relationship, collateral, guarantee, personal liability, or cross-default provision is required.
   C. Provide illustrative annual net benefit at $13 million in spend and sensitivity at $10 million and $16 million.
   D. Bismarck Public Schools anticipates that the purchasing card program will be provided at no cost to the District. The District expects no annual program fees, card issuance or replacement fees, implementation costs, transaction fees, or other administrative charges associated with the program. Any proposed fees or exceptions to this expectation must be clearly identified and explained in the vendor's proposal.

5. **Technical and Control Requirements**
   A. Describe administrator access, separation of duties, approval hierarchy, audit trails, transaction-level coding, general ledger export format, API/file integration, SSO/MFA, data retention, cybersecurity controls, incident response, PCI DSS responsibilities, disaster recovery, and records retrieval.
   B. Identify system availability commitments and any subcontractors or third-party platforms.

6. **Implementation and Transition**
   A. Provide a transition schedule including account setup, card distribution, testing, employee training, overlap with the current provider (if different), outstanding charges, dispute resolution, historical data export, and post-launch support.
   B. Identify BPS staff effort and all conversion costs.

7. **Vendor Qualifications**
   A. Provide legal name and headquarters, regulatory status, financial strength, relevant public-school or government references (at least three preferred), years providing P-Card services, implementation team, dedicated service contacts, and any material regulatory or security events in the preceding three years with remediation summaries.

8. **Required Proposal Format**
   A. Executive summary
   B. Company qualifications
   C. Functional and security response
      Detailed pricing and rebate schedule
   D. Implementation plan
   E. References
   F. Community and district involvement statement, including documented initiatives and any proposed future commitments
   G. Exceptions to proposed contract terms
   H. Sample agreement, service-level commitments, and data security documentation

9. **Evaluation Framework**
   Subject to final legal review of the applicable procurement method, BPS anticipates evaluating proposals using the following weighted criteria (Total 100 pts):
   A. Financial return and rebate structure (35 points)
   B. Reporting and accounting integration (25 points)
   C. Internal controls and fraud prevention (15 points)
   D. Customer service and implementation (15 points)
   E. Community and district involvement (10 points)

   Community and district involvement will be assessed using documented examples of support for education, workforce development, student opportunities, volunteerism, financial literacy, or comparable community partnerships. Local headquarters or prior donations to BPS are not prerequisites for receiving points. Community contributions are not required as a condition of award, and any commitments must be described separately from the purchasing card rebate.

10. **Vendor Demonstrations**
    Bismarck Public Schools reserves the right to invite selected proposers to participate in a demonstration of their proposed purchasing card platform and related services as part of the evaluation process. Demonstrations may include system functionality, administrative controls, transaction reporting, accounting integration, reconciliation processes, and customer support capabilities.

    Demonstrations may be conducted in person or virtually, at the District's discretion. BPS will provide participating vendors with advance notice of demonstration requirements and

expectations. The District is not obligated to request demonstrations from all proposers or to conduct demonstrations as part of the selection process.

Information obtained during demonstrations may be considered in evaluating proposals under the established weighted evaluation criteria.

**11. Proposed Procurement Schedule**

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| RFP issued: | November 2, 2026 |
| Deadline for written questions: | November 13, 2026 |
| Written addendum issued: | November 18, 2026 |
| Proposals Due: | November 20, 2026 |
| Evaluation / Demonstrations: | November 30 to December 4, 2026 |
| Target Launch: | January 4, 2027 |

All substantive bidder questions and answers will be shared uniformly through written addenda.

**12. General Terms**

BPS reserves rights permitted by applicable law to reject submissions, request clarifications, and cancel or reissue the solicitation. Proposal preparation costs are the bidder's responsibility. No contract exists until approved and executed by authorized District representatives. The final agreement must address governing law, records access and audit rights, data ownership, confidentiality subject to public records law, security incident notification, termination, transition assistance, indemnification and insurance as appropriate, and restrictions on unilateral fee or rebate changes.

**13. Statutory and Policy Review Before Release**

NDCC 44-08-05.1(2) authorizes school boards to establish and administer purchasing card systems.

## Attachment A — Bidder Financial Schedule

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| 1. Guaranteed Base Rebate % |
| 2. Tier Schedule |
| 3. Eligible Spend Exclusions |
| 4. Annual Program Fee |
| 5. Per Card Fee |
| 6. Implementation Charge |
| 7. Transaction/Foreign Charges |
| 8. Payment Grace Period |
| 9. Annual Net Rebate at $10M, $13M and $16M |
| 10. Proposed Initial Term and Renewals |
| 11. Termination Charges |

## Attachment B — Vendor Response Checklist

Confirm whether each requirement is Standard / Configurable / Third-party / Not available and describe any cost: card controls; virtual cards; MFA/SSO; fraud alerts; dispute handling; administrative reporting; dedicated support; migration assistance; data export at termination.