



DISTRICT FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

General Questions about MRPC

Q – Why should I join the MRPC?

A – Over the past years, Texas purchasing laws required public entities that purchase more than a certain dollar amount in a category for the entire year to competitively bid all purchases for that category. By being a member and making your purchases through the cooperative, you can have the assurance that you can purchase the products you need and still meet Texas purchasing laws.

By purchasing your standard items through the combined purchasing RFP, you increase your purchasing power through the combined quantities of all the participating school districts. Greater quantities yield better pricing.

Q – What RFPs does the MRPC offer?

A – Currently, the MRPC offers three RFPs each year. Those RFPs are:

- Combined Purchasing RFP – a list of specific office and instructional supply type items for a **one-time purchase**. The participating school districts enter the quantity they expect to order for these items before the posting of the RFP. Once the RFP has been awarded, purchase orders are submitted from each participating school to the vendor for delivery in July to the individual schools/campuses. The schools are only able to order from this RFP during the specific time frame set for the RFP.
- Instructional/General Supply Catalog RFP – a RFP that lists various categories of goods (e.g., office supplies, maintenance supplies, miscellaneous instructional supply, science equipment & supplies, athletic supplies, nursing supplies, etc.). The term of this RFP is August 1 of the RFP year to August 31 of the following year (i.e., August 1, 2019 – August 31, 2020).
- Technology Catalog RFP – a RFP that lists various categories of technology goods (e.g., workstations, peripheral devices, audio-visual, distance learning equipment, etc.). The term of this RFP is August 1 of the RFP year to August 31 of the following year (i.e., August 1, 2019 – August 31, 2020).

Q – How are the RFPs awarded?

A – Each RFP is evaluated by the MRPC awards committee, which is made up of representatives from each of the four regional Education Service Centers and participating school districts. RFPs are evaluated based on the requirements of TEC 44.031 (see the RFP specifications for more details.) Catalog RFPs are awarded to the top 85% best-evaluated responding vendors within each category. The items on the Combined Purchasing RFP are awarded line by line to the vendor(s) the committee evaluates as being the one who best meets the outlined criteria.

Q – How do I know if I am getting good prices through these RFPs?

A – The MRPC Awards Committee evaluates the responses to the Combined Purchasing (line item) RFP line-by-line to ensure the awarded price is in line with pricing that can be obtained through purchase outside the cooperative. Remember the purchasing power achieved by combining the quantities of the participating members helps to ensure good pricing. The Awards Committee does not award an item to any vendor if it feels that the pricing is not as good as what the districts could get otherwise. Pricing has

remained relatively stable from year-to-year. If you have any concerns we encourage you to talk with your regional ESC contact person about becoming a member of the Awards Committee for your region.

In using the catalog RFPs, we encourage you to get several quotes from participating vendors, while following your local policy and procedures. This will ensure you are receiving best possible pricing for the products you need.

Q – How do I join the MRPC?

A – Membership in the MRPC is accomplished through an interlocal agreement. If you are a school district within one of the four member regions (Region 9, 11, 14 or 15), the agreement will need to first be approved by your local school board, then sent to your regional Education Service Center for approval by its board, then the agreement will be sent to Region 9 ESC (the administrating ESC) for approval by its board. Contact your local ESC contact for the appropriate agreement.

For school districts outside of Region 9, 11, 14 or 15, the interlocal agreement will need to be approved by your local school board, then sent to Region 9 ESC for approval by its board. Please note that we welcome participation by schools outside the participating regions. However, depending on your geographical location, you may or may not be eligible to participate in the Combined Purchasing RFP. Contact MRPC administrative support staff Dana Parrish at dana.parrish@esc9.net or call her at 940.322.6928, to receive a copy of the agreement and to find out if you are eligible to participate in the Combined Purchasing RFP.

Q – Is there a fee to be a member of the MRPC?

A – If you participate in the Combined Purchasing RFP, you will be charged a fee of 3% of your total orders placed through the RFP. You may then use the approved vendors on the Instructional/General Supply catalog and the Technology catalog lists at no additional charge. If you do not participate in the Combined Purchasing RFP, you will be charged a fee of \$100 for each catalog RFP you choose to use. The fees will be invoiced by and will be payable to your regional ESC (usually in August).