FAQ'S FOR K12 SCHOOLS

Who is National IPA?

National IPA is a cooperative purchasing organization dedicated to serving public agencies and educational institutions nationwide. Participating in the cooperative buying power of more than 48,000 entities allows you to pay less for products and reduce administrative costs, which helps you do more with less. All cooperative agreements have been competitively solicited and publicly awarded by a public agency/governmental entity (e.g. state, city, county, public university or school district), utilizing the best public procurement practices, processes and procedures. Participation is free and there are no obligations or minimums. www.nationalipa.org

What is the US Foods Contract Available from National IPA?

Contract #112917-USF was competively solicited and publicly awarded by public agency Sourcewell, awarded to US Foods. This is a prime vendor program for food and food supplies. This cooperative contract offers both time and money savings by leveraging the aggregation of volume from members nationwide.

Who is Lead Agency Sourcewell?

Sourcewell is a public agency serving as a municipal contracting agency for government and education agencies. Sourcewell serves member agencies under the legislative authority established and granted by Minnesota Statute 123A.21.

What Specific Statue Gives My Agency the Authority to Participate?

Generally, joint powers and/or cooperative purchasing laws create the authority for members to work together with Sourcewell and accept Sourcewell procurement laws. These laws are a part of state law in every state, however, they are written slightly differently. Essentially, what these laws state is: "What two units of government can individually do for themselves, one can do for the other." Sourcewell's contracting process mirrors public agency's processes. In creating a contract pathway through a unified and commonly embraced contracting process, Sourcewell contracts are accepted by the highest level of government and education agencies across the country. Sourcewell increases our members' comfort by conducting complete financial audits of our organization annually through an independent auditor with the results submitted to the State of Minnesota as required by state law.

How is Sourcewell's Solicitation Process Compliant with USDA Purchasing Guidelines?

Sourcewell is an intergovernmental entity comprised of member school districts and governments joining through an intergovernmental agreement. Sourcewell is established as a service cooperative under Minn. Stat. 123A.21. Sourcewell is a public entity, Minnesota Independent School District #924. As a service cooperative, Sourcewell is statutorily charged with providing cooperative purchasing contracts and shared education services to its eligible members. Sourcewell is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of elected public officials.

Membership eligibility is available for all public school districts and nonprofit schools. Through operation of an intergovernmental agreement, any eligible Program Operator may join the cooperative at no cost. Program Operator responsibilities and obligations are defined in the intergovernmental agreement.

Because Sourcewell is an intergovernmental entity, Program Operator members do not need to competitively solicit the procurement of Sourcewell's cooperative services. Sourcewell does not procure goods and services on behalf of its membership. Sourcewell solicits and awards procurement contracts on behalf of itself (acting as the lead agency) and all eligible members. Sourcewell's solicitation and resulting awarded cooperative purchasing contracts contain explicit language allowing eligible members to "piggyback" of the terms and conditions of the agreement. Sourcewell does not utilize the services of any third party to facilitate this process.

Members joining through an intergovernmental agreement gain access to Sourcewell's cooperative purchasing contracts. Procurement by a Sourcewell member Program Operator is done directly with Sourcewell's awarded vendors.

How Can I Obtain Copies of the Legal Documentation Associated with Each Contract?

Related contract and competitive solicited process documentation is available on the Sourcewell and National IPA websites at WWW.NATIONALIPA.ORG and/or WWW.SOURCEWELL-MN.GOV

What is the Food Contract's Key Program Value for K12 SCHOOLS?

- Trusted national distribution partner with local service and expertise
- Compliant with State and USDA Compliant Purchasing Guidelines
- Pricing based on national purchasing volume creating lowest cost of goods
- Financial rewards for operational efficiency
- Full spectrum of product lines needed by K-12 foodservice professionals
- NSLP supported with NOI, Buy American, and Smart Snack
- Product variety not limited to restrictive bid list
- Industry-leading, easy e-commerce platform, with nutritionals, product pictures, recipes and more
- Exclusive analytics reporting focused on savings and satisfaction
- Technology enabling price uploads to 3rd party software management systems
- Value added tools (PinPoint) focused on cost management, improved operational efficiencies, and satisfaction
- Food Safety is core, best in class recall process
- Reliable and accurate deliveries and invoices – often next day deliveries

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