

Appendix VIII: Purchasing Services Available to California School Districts

California school districts and affiliated agencies have developed a number of strategies for improving their purchasing practices. That includes a multitude of non-profit purchasing services that enable districts large and small to enjoy substantial economies of scale. Particularly since the emergence of the Internet as a communications tool in the last decade, a number of online networks have been introduced that are devoted specifically to this goal. Following are some of the most notable.

- **Public School Services, www.psservices.org**, allows members to “piggyback” their purchases on another agency’s contract. Instead of having to competitively bid for every purchase worth more than \$60,500, districts can instead utilize a contract that has already been awarded to another public agency. Districts can buy office and classroom supplies, digital copiers, audio-visual equipment, maintenance and custodial supplies, and furniture using this approach. This 501(c)(3) non-profit is supported by Price Charities.
- **CalSAVE, www.calsave.org**, leverages the collective buying power of members to reduce prices. There is no participation fee, and every California K–12 school, district, or county office of education is eligible to participate. The Monterey County Office of Education sponsors CalSAVE, which received start-up funds from the California Department of Education.
- **EdBuy, www.EdBuy.org**, is a cooperative purchasing program operated by the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (CCSESA). EdBuy goes to bid on behalf of school districts and county offices of education. EdBuy also offers other services, such as checking for errors on members’ purchase orders and recording line-item data to give users periodic purchasing reports.
- **Schools Legal Services, www.schoolslegalservice.org**, is a joint powers agency that provides legal and collective bargaining services to California public education agencies. School Legal Services began in 1976. Members pay a minimum annual fee for legal services based on student enrollment. Collective bargaining services are provided for an additional fee. The organization also provides a help desk for general education law matters, such as disciplinary proceedings, mediation, construction document review or litigation, representation in PERB hearings, and copyright and trademark registration.