Textbooks and Instructional Materials for Private and Nonpublics: Nonpublic Information System (NPIS)

School Eligibility to Participate

Q. How does my school sign up for the Act 195/90/35 Textbooks and Instructional Materials for Private and Nonpublic Schools Program?

A. If your school is currently registered or licensed, you must complete an *Affirmation of Eligibility of Students* form to request to participate in the Act 195/90/35 Program. In addition to the *Affirmation of Eligibility of Students* form, your school must submit an annual enrollment report. To obtain a copy of the *Affirmation of Eligibility of Students* form, click on "Affirmation Form" at: http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/programs_and_services/7425 .

Q. How do I know if my school is eligible?

A. If you completed the *Affirmation of Eligibility of Students* form and you submitted your annual enrollment report through the Private and Nonpublic School Enrollment (PNPE) system and indicated that you are interested in participating in the Act 195/90/35 Program, then your school is eligible, provided the criteria stated on the *Affirmation of Eligibility of Students* form are met. You can view the criteria by clicking on "Affirmation Form" at: http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/programs_and_services/7425.

Q. Is there a website with more information about eligibility?

A. Refer to the Guidebook for ordering Texbooks, Instructional Materials and Equipment under Acts 195/90/35 for Nonpublic and Private School Students located on the Pennsylvania Department of Education's (PDE) website at: http://www.education.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/programs_and_services/7425.

Enrollment Reporting

Q. How do I report enrollments?

A. Enrollments are reported in the Private and Nonpublic School Enrollment (PNPE) system. If you have any questions, send an email with the details to ra-pnpdata@pa.gov.

Q. What should I do if I cannot get my enrollment submission to go through?

A. Send an email with all of the details to PDE at ra-pnpdata@pa.gov.

Item Eligibility

Q. What items are not eligible?

A. Refer to the Guidebook for ordering Texbooks, Instructional Materials and Equipment under Acts 195/90/35 for Nonpublic and Private School Students located on the Pennsylvania Department of Education's (PDE) website at: http://www.education.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/programs_and_services/7425 .

Q. What items are eligible?

A. Refer to the Guidebook for ordering Texbooks, Instructional Materials and Equipment under Acts 195/90/35 for Nonpublic and Private School Students located on the Pennsylvania Department of Education's (PDE) website at: http://www.education.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/programs_and_services/7425.

Q. What if I am unable to determine whether or not an item is eligible?

A. Using the Nonpublic Information System (NPIS) submit the item for item pre-approval by clicking on the "Items" tab and then clicking on the "Add New" button. Submit all the required information and a determination will be made as to the items eligibility.

Item Pre-Approval

Q. How do I request to add an item to the Nonpublic Information System?

A. Once you are logged in to the Nonpublic Information System (NPIS), click on the "Items" tab. On this screen, you will see an "Add New" button. Clicking on this button opens up the "Item Add" screen, where you can provide details about the new item to be added. Clicking on the "Save" button will send the item to the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) for approval.

Q. When will my item be approved?

A. Once an item is submitted by a school, the status is changed to "Pending PDE" and it is sent to PDE for approval. If the item has sufficient details and can be deemed eligible by PDE, the status will be changed to "Eligible." If PDE is unable to determine if the item is eligible or not, a comment/question will be entered, and the item status will change to "Pending School." Such items will remain in "Pending School" status until the requesting school provides additional details and saves the item, which in turn sends it back to PDE for approval. If the item does not meet the eligibility criteria, then its status is changed to "Not Eligible" by PDE. "Not Eligible" items cannot be added to a purchase order.

Q. How do I request an item that is free?

A. When requesting the item for approval, you must check the box titled "No Charge Item."

Q. Must I supply a web address for the item?

A. Yes, you must provide the URL from the webpage containing the vendor's description of the item, not the vendor's home page. This will speed up the approval process.

Q. How do I know if the item I requested has been approved or not?
A. If the item no longer displays on the Nonpublic Information System Dashboard, a determination has been made. You must go to the "Items" tab and then search for that item.

Q. What information should I provide about the purpose of an item?
A. Explain how the item will be used, what class it will be used in and who will use the item.

Item Search

Q. What does obsolete mean under "Vendor Item Availability"?
A. Obsolete means that the vendor no longer carries that item.

Q. What if I cannot find an item when I search?
A. If you are unable to find the item in the catalog, try searching using part of the item name, or by the item catalog number or ISBN/model number, as applicable. You can narrow down the search results by using more than one search criteria like vendor name, item name and item type. As a last resort, click on the "Add New" button and submit the item for PDE approval.

Allocation or Allotment

Q. How much is my school's allotment?
A. When you log in to NPIS, you will see your school's allotment on the home screen.

Q. How is my school's allotment determined?
A. Whenever the tentative or final allotment is determined, a letter is emailed to you with the details. In general, the allotment is based on your school's enrollment count as of October 1st of the previous year, which is reported by your school to PDE in the annual *Private and Nonpublic School Enrollment Report* and submitted between October 1st and 15th of each year. If you did not receive a letter from PDE, please send an email to ra-pnpdata@pa.gov.

Q. What if I think that my school's allocation is not correct in the NPIS system?
A. Your school's tentative and final allocation is based on the enrollment count submitted by October 1st of the previous year. Your school's qualification for any available reallotment is determined based on the consumption of allotted funds by November 14th.

Q. What are the spend-down requirements to avoid the loss of allotted funds?
A. The spend-down requirements to avoid the loss of allotted funds is that any school that has a balance greater than $5,000 or a balance greater than 10 percent of its original allotment after the evaluation of expenditures, will have the remainder of its allotment placed into reserve for reallotment to other nonpublic schools in January.

Q. What is the reallotment process?
A. The details about the reallotment process are mentioned in the tentative; as well as the final allotment letter that schools receive from PDE. If you did not receive a letter from PDE, please send an email to ra-pnpdata@pa.gov.

Q. When will we know our reallotment?
A. In January of the program year schools will receive the reallotment letter from PDE. This amount is also shown in the Nonpublic Information System Dashboard.

Vendor Registration

Q. How does a textbook vendor register?
A. A new vendor needs to fill out the New Vendor Registration Form by going to the NPIS website: https://www.npis.pa.gov/screens/admin/vendor and clicking on the "Add New" button.

Q. The vendor tried to register, however NPIS wouldn't accept their vendor information. What could be the problem?
A. Some of the common reasons why the system will not accept new vendor information include:
- Fields marked with an asterisk are not filled.
- Federal ID number provided is not in the correct format.
- Vendor Data Management Unit (VDMU) number provided is not in the correct format.
- Phone number and/or fax number provided is not in the correct format.
- ZIP code provided for the country selected is not in the correct format. United States ZIP codes follow: 99999-9999 format, whereas Canadian provinces follow: X0X-0X0 format, where the "-" may or may not be provided.
- The link "Terms and Conditions" is not clicked to view the Terms and Conditions, or the checkbox next to it is not checked.

If the entire spot checks above are addressed, NPIS will allow the vendor to submit the registration request by clicking on the "Save" button. If the vendor is still experiencing issues, send a detailed email to PDE at: ra-fintrans@pa.gov.

Q. How will I know if/when my vendor registration is accepted?
A. You can look up your vendor registration status at https://www.npis.pa.gov/screens/admin/vendor by searching using your vendor name and/or Federal ID number, and/or city. Vendor registration will be in one of the following statuses:
- Pending Approval: This means PDE is still doing research and has not made a decision yet.
- Open: You are an approved and active vendor participating in the Act 195/90/35 Program, and schools can place orders with you.
- Closed: You are not an active vendor participating in the Act 195/90/35 Program, but were either interested or active in the past.

Q. How long does it take for my vendor registration to be accepted?

A. PDE NPIS administrator is notified as soon as you submit the registration form for new vendors. The approval may take up to several days.

Q. How will vendors who do not accept MasterCard be paid?

A. If a vendor does not accept MasterCard or if the invoice is more than $10,000, the vendor will be paid manually. For this to occur, the vendor must be registered with the Vendor Data Management Unit: https://pasupplierportal.state.pa.us/irj/portal/anonymous

Q. How does a vendor change their address or other information?

A. The vendor should email the NPIS office, at ra-act195-90@pa.gov, and request the changes to their information.

Purchase Order

Q. How does my school submit a purchase order?

A. When you log in to the NPIS system and go to the "Purchase Order" tab, you will see a "Create Purchase Order" button. Clicking on that button will take you to the "Create Purchase Order" screen. This button is visible only if the final budget has passed, and schools have received their final allotments for the year.
On the Create Purchase Order screen, you will need to select a vendor and provide quote details. If the quote details are valid, (meaning:
- the quote is valid for more than 15 days; and
- the quote amount is less than or equal to the school's remaining allotment; and
- the quote file is attached or the quote URL is provided)
you can proceed with the selection of items by furnishing the item quantity and unit price, followed by the shipment charges. If the total purchase order price, including the total price of all items and the shipment charges, is the same as the quote amount, and less than or equal to the school's remaining allotment, then you can submit the purchase order.

Q. How does my school obtain/print a copy of the purchase order?

A. On the "Purchase Order" screen, you can search for your purchase order by providing the purchase order number and/or other details and clicking on the "Search" button. In the search results shown, click on the "Select" link for the purchase order of interest to open up the Purchase Order Details screen. At the bottom of this screen, there is a "Print PO" button. Clicking this button will allow you to view/print the purchase order.

Q. What happens when the information printed on the purchase order is not correct?

A. The purchase order shows the information based on the purchase order details. If you think it is not showing correct information, send an email to PDE at ra-act195-90@pa.gov, along with the purchase order attachment for clarifications.

Q. How does my school make changes to a purchase order?

A. You can make changes to a purchase order as long as it is in the "Incomplete" status. After it is submitted, the purchase order goes to "Approved" status. Once in "Approved" status, you cannot make any changes to the purchase order other than canceling it.

Approved purchase orders move to "Released" status nightly and are transmitted to the vendors. If you want to cancel an order that is released to the vendor, you need to contact the vendor to ask if they can still cancel the order. If the vendor allows the cancellation, you must send an email to ra-act195-90@pa.gov and notify PDE of the cancellation.

Login Issues

Q. How can a vendor log into NPIS?

A. Vendors cannot log into NPIS. However, vendors can view their details or inventory by going to https://www.npis.pa.gov/screens/admin/vendor and searching by vendor name.

Q. How does a school or diocese log into NPIS?

A. A user ID number and password is initially sent along with the tentative allotment letter to all schools and dioceses. Upon first time login, the user will be prompted to reset the password to a new password. This password can be changed at any time.

Q. What if the school or diocese forgets their user ID number or password?

A. If you forget the password, you can click on the "Forgot Password" link on the login screen. This will prompt you to enter the user ID number and the email address you have previously registered in NPIS. If the information entered is correct, then a new temporary password is sent to the registered email address. If a school or diocese user forgets their user ID or registered email address, then an email must be sent to PDE at ra-act195-90@pa.gov.

Placing an Order/Quotes/Returns/Credits

Q. When can my school place an order?

A. After you receive the final allotment letter, the NPIS system will allow you to create purchase orders by going to the "Purchase Order" tab and clicking on the "Create Purchase Order" button. Purchase orders can be created until the date mentioned in the school's final allotment letter.
The button "Create Purchase Order" is visible only during the allowed time for creating purchase orders.

Q. Why can't my school submit a purchase order?

A. The reason why you cannot submit a purchase order is shown on the screen. If no reason is shown or the reason shown looks incorrect, please send an email to PDE at ra-act195-90@pa.gov, with all of the relevant details.
Some of the possible reasons are listed below:
- School did not get any reallotted funds.
- The quote amount and purchase order amount do not match.
- The purchase order amount has exceeded the remaining allotment balance.
- Shipment charges are not provided.
- No items have been added to the order.

Q. Is it mandatory to obtain a quote from the vendor?

A. Yes, it is mandatory to get a quote from the vendor and furnish the details of the quote while placing an order in the NPIS system.

Q. Who do the schools notify if the items received were incorrect or items were not received at all?

A. Receipt of incorrect items: Schools must notify the vendor immediately for incorrect items received, and request that they be replaced and the account adjusted accordingly. The school should email PDE at ra-act195-90@pa.gov to notify the NPIS office of the status.

Order received but missing items: If there are missing items in the shipment and the packing list does not indicate they are on backorder, the school should call the vendor to report the shortage and ask that they be sent. Notify the NPIS office of the status by sending an email to PDE at ra-act195-90@pa.gov.

Order not received at all: If the school does not receive the order at all, the school should check the NPIS system and make sure the purchase order was actually approved and transmitted to the vendor. If NPIS definitely indicates it was transmitted to the vendor and the order has not yet arrived after a reasonable length of time, contact the vendor and ask for the status on the order. If the vendor says they never received the purchase order, the school should notify PDE at ra-act195-90@pa.gov to request that the purchase order be resent to the vendor.   Schools should NOT send a copy of the purchase order to the vendor directly.

Q. What is the process for returning items?

A. The school should contact the vendor immediately, discuss returning the items, and request a credit memo. The school should email PDE at ra-act195-90@pa.gov to provide PDE's NPIS office with details of what was returned and what the vendor agreed to.

Q. How do I know when a credit was received for items returned?

A. Schools will see their remaining allotment balance increase by the amount of the credit. Once the credit is received, it is added to the school's remaining allotment.

Q. How will Catholic schools know when their diocese has approved their requests?

A. Catholic schools will see their purchase orders in "Pending Diocese Approval" status until they are approved by the diocese. Once approved, the purchase order status will be changed to "Approved." Schools can view their purchase order status on the NPIS application home screen at any time.

Q. How long do the dioceses have to approve school requests?

A. There is no time limit.

Q. What if the quote expires before the order is approved by the diocese?

A. The order will be sent to the vendor once the diocese approves it. Since the entire approval process is handled online, the approval process doesn't take much time, unless the diocese representative is not available.

Application Error

Q.   NPIS has extremely slow response times, the screens do not seem to be working properly, or I have experienced an unusual error. What should I do?

A. Try to refresh the screen. If that does not help, close the application and try again. If you are still facing issues, then click on the "Help & Support" link on PDE's website or within NPIS to enter a help desk ticket and provide the details of what you are experiencing.

Browsers supported for running NPIS include: Firefox, Chrome and Internet Explorer 8.0/above.