

Q & A for CIS Funds

1. 4/3/2008 Can teachers purchase file cabinets with CIS Funds?

Yes, if the file cabinets are for classroom instructional files or items. No, if for extra-curricular or fund-raising files or items.

2. 4/1/2008 One of the teachers wants to buy book shelves with state instructional supply money. Does that meet the definition of instructional supplies?

The book shelves are allowable if they will be used for instructional items and remain in the classroom.

3. 3/24/2008 Regarding local school finance, can a non-certified person be on the local school technology budget committee as the principal's designee? It states there must be four teachers and the principal or his/her designee.

*The law does not restrict the principal's designee to certified staff to the **budget committee for classroom instructional support**. The principal can designate a non-certified person as the principal's representative on the **classroom instructional support budget committee**. This committee may appoint advisory subcommittees consisting of teachers at the grade levels or departments. The law does not allow the principal to appoint members of the local school technology budget subcommittee that proposes a budget for the expenditure of the state teacher allocation for technology included in classroom instructional support and the members of this subcommittee must be teachers.*

4. 3/18/2008 One of our teachers wants to know if she can purchase plastic storage containers to store her blank tests in. Is this acceptable?

Yes, that sounds o.k. to me.

5. 3/6/2008 At one of our elementary schools the teachers voted to buy equipment and software with their technology funds. If they need to spend more on the equipment line and less on the software line (about \$500.00) do they need to (and can they) revote on how the money is spent or can they go over the budgeted amount if the function and program code are the same, only a different object code?

If the change is immaterial to the total amount of the school's technology budget, revoting is not necessary. (\$500 may be material to a \$4000 budget but not to a \$10,000 technology budget.) That is assuming the teachers are o.k. with this and the principal is not ignoring the teachers plans for the use of the funds.

6. 3/4/2008 Do you see a problem with us ordering from Office Depot some supplies a teacher wants for her classroom? She doesn't have anymore fee money and wants to reimburse the school for the purchase. Is this an OK practice?

It is o.k. as long as it is used only for classroom purposes. Cannot be for personal use.

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7. 2/21/2008 Do you think the pencil grips used for incentives and the bulletin board material are ok to purchase with CIS funds?

Yes, these are allowable.

8. 2/21/2008 I know I must be slow in understanding for I have one more question about the purchase of equipment with state instructional support funds. I looked up Section 16-1-8.1 and in item (6) Competitive Bids and Vouchers it states The board may also authorize each school or individual teachers to purchase materials and supplies, instructional equipment, and electrical equipment for classroom instruction by the voucher system with no one item exceeding the sum of \$7500.00. If for example a school is purchasing five computers at \$5000.00 each for a total of \$25,000.00 with no one item exceeding \$7500.00 does it have to be bid? I wasn't sure if the like items stipulation comes into effect with state instructional support funds.

The wording about a voucher system is hard to understand because that is an outdated accounting system. The State Examiners have interpreted that to mean that, if the school system sends the funds to the school or if the items are purchased with a purchasing card, bids are not required except for items with a unit cost of \$7500 or more. In your case, if the teachers (through their budget approved by the majority vote of the faculty) want to purchase the computers for instructional purposes, no bids are required because no item costs more than \$7500. This exception for the unit cost of the item applies only to the per teacher allocation amount mandated by the state. Any local school board funds you provide to the school, over and above the state mandated amount, would not get this exception.

9. 2/21/2008 Can CIS funds be spent on canned air to spray the keyboards?

Yes, if it is for the computer used in classroom instruction.

10. 2/20/2008 I am sorry to keep bothering you but I want to be sure I understand the purchases made by our teachers. Can they purchase chairs for their students in the classrooms?

I can't say that this is illegal but I usually say no because I believe that it is the school board's responsibility to furnish the classroom desks and chairs as part of providing the classroom. If the teacher wants to buy a special chair that is used for the "Student of the Week" or some similar recognition or reward I would say yes. Otherwise, I see nothing instructional about the chair.

11. 2/20/2008 Are flash drives ok to purchase with CIS Funds?

Yes, if used for classroom instruction.

12. 2/20/2008 Is it ok for teachers to purchase batteries for the CD Players with CIS Funds?

Yes, if the CD players are used for classroom instruction. No, if used for extra-curricular activities or personal use.

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13. 2/20/2008 Is it ok for teachers to purchase power strips, surge protectors with CIS funds?

Yes, if the power strips and surge protectors are for items used for classroom instruction. No, if used for the teacher's personal equipment such as coffee pots.

14. 2/16/2008 Did you tell me that equipment purchased with state instructional funds and state technology funds was not subject to the bid law or did I dream that?

Section 16-1-8.1(b)(6) provides a qualified exemption from the state bid law for items purchased from the classroom instructional support allocations (for items costing less than \$7500). Bulk purchases by the school board would still be subject to bidding. So some of the technology purchases or copier paper may need to be bid. If you allow your teachers to use a purchasing card to purchase copier paper, bidding is not required.

15. 2/13/2008 We have one school budget committee in our system that wants to retain \$86 of state technology funds per individual teacher to provide technology based on classroom needs, excluding software. They also want to retain \$100 of library enhancement per individual teacher (half of the allocation) to purchase classroom book sets and materials and supplies to support classroom library and reading in the classroom. Can they retain a portion of these funds to be spent by individual teachers?

The school's library media specialist must be consulted for determining the expenditures for the library enhancement funds. Two laws state that these funds are for the school's library media center. [16-6B-10(a)(5) and 16-13-231(b)(2)c.]

The technology expenditures must be consistent with the technology plan filed with our department. But the technology funds can be for items in the classroom.

The budget committee can propose a technology budget for the teachers to approve that will allow the funds to be used for individual teachers' classrooms if consistent with the technology plan. Our department's library specialist has warned schools not to use library enhancement funds for the individual teachers to purchase materials for the classroom.

16. 1/9/2008 Could you help me with an issue that has come up? We have two Speech Therapists who happen to be certified teachers. As I understand it, the certification is not a requirement. They are coded to object code 128, a support object code. We are paying them off of the Teacher Salary Schedule. The question has come up because I did not send CIS funds to them. 16-6B-10 indicates that all teachers are to receive the funds. Would we be required to give these positions the CIS funds? We only have two, so \$1,050.00 is not worth making a mountain out of a mole hill.

If the speech therapists are teachers and are not covered by the Fair Dismissal Act, they would get the allocations. You are treating them as teachers for pay purposes but as support workers for personnel reporting. Teacher certification no longer recognizes an endorsement for Speech Therapy. If speech therapist positions are not required to have a teaching certificate, they are not teachers (even if they have valid teaching certificate).

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17. 12/5/2007 Can we use state technology funds to purchase a laminator for the elementary school? They have funds budgeted for equipment.

No. The laminators that I have seen would not be allowable as technology.

18. 12/3/2007 At one of our schools the teachers voted to spend the technology support funds as follows: "Technology allocation in the amount of \$14,350.00 will be expended for instructional computer hardware (non-capitalized) (laptops and projectors), software, and ink cartridges and toner for labs." They have decided they don't need the software this year and they will use the funds budgeted for software towards computers. Do they have to revote?

Yes, I believe the school faculty should be allowed to vote by secret ballot on a revised budget unless the approved budget contained wording that would allow the change.

19. 12/3/2007 Do you know if it is permissible to use teacher professional development funds to pay subs if the teachers are taken from the classroom and trained in the school building?

If that expenditure is included in the school budget approved by the school faculty and is consistent with the system-wide professional development plan, it would be permissible.

20. 10/25/2007 Do you have any documentation that tells how Library Enhancement \$\$ is to be spent? One of my librarians thought there was a change this year.

*I have included below excerpts from the state laws relating to library enhancement funds. The items listed are not the only items that may be purchased. The teachers vote on how these funds are to be spent and the librarian can only offer advice to the school budget committee. These laws indicate that the purchases are to be for the library/media center and not the classroom. **There have been no changes to the state laws relating to these funds.***

Section 16-6B-10

5) Library enhancement funds must be budgeted for all teachers based on the rate appropriated per teacher unit by the Legislature in the Foundation Program. The library enhancement appropriation shall be for K-12 Public School Library/Media Centers and is an absolute appropriation. Expenditures may include books, book binding, repair, CD Roms, computer software, computer equipment, cataloging, audiovisual materials, newspapers, magazines, recordings, and video tapes.

Section 16-13-231

c. The Foundation Program allowance for classroom instructional support shall be determined by multiplying a uniform amount times the number of teacher units allowed in Section 16-13-232. The uniform amount shall include allowances for library enhancement, classroom materials and supplies, professional development, and technology. The library enhancement appropriation shall be for K-12 Public School Library/Media Centers and is an absolute appropriation. Other expenditures may include book binding, repair, CD Roms, computer software, computer equipment, cataloging, audio-visual materials, newspapers, magazines, recordings, and video tapes.

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21. 10/16/2007 Can you give me information in regards to what can and can not be purchased with CIS funds? We will be using credit cards this year for the first time for CIS funds. I have had questions regarding file folders, cartridges used in printers to print out student papers etc. I want to be sure to give correct answers to our teachers and not allow incorrect purchases. We are centralized in the fact the schools send one part of the PO to the board and we put it into the system and pay for supplies ordered.

No items can be purchased with the purchasing card that could not be purchase using purchase orders. The purchases allowed are instructional materials, supplies, and equipment used in the classroom. Travel would not be allowable.

22. 3/31/2015 Can a teacher use ISM funds to purchase smart board bulbs? or would that be considered maintenance of equipment? The bulbs are around \$160.00 each.

I have told CSFOs that the Student Materials funds may be used for batteries for recorders but the cost of batteries is not significant compared to the bulbs for the smart boards. In this case, I would look at the smart board bulbs like the overhead light bulbs and considered the smart board bulb replacement to be maintenance.

23. 3/11/2015 Can we use the textbook allocation from Foundation to purchase Chromebooks to be used in the classroom for instruction?

For textbook funds...No hardware, only instructional materials (software, e-books ok).

24. 7/15/2013 Please clarify if Classroom Instructional Supply funds (*Student Materials allocations*) may be used for maintenance on copiers located in teachers' lounge. The principal is requesting to use teacher fee monies for this expense.

No.

25. 4/23/2013 Is it okay for a teacher to use her instructional funds to pay for a field trip for the students? If so, could she go further by using some of it to pay for their lunch also?

No. Student materials allocation can only be used for materials, supplies, and equipment used in the teacher's classroom.

26. 2/23/2013 Sorry to bother you but the secretary at one of our junior high schools called with a question about the \$300.00 per teacher supply money. The art teacher at the school wants to use her money to bring in a local artist to do hands on instruction on art projects. Is this permissible?

The state law would not allow the student materials allocation of the classroom instructional supply funds to be used to bring an artist to the classroom. Maybe PTA will pay the cost if the artist demands payment for coming to the classroom.

27. 1/4/2013 I know that teachers can use the student material money to buy copy paper for their classroom. Would a toner cartridge be allowed as long as it was for a printer in the teacher's classroom?

Yes

28. 12/4/2012 Can teachers use their ISM to purchase educational apps for ipad?

Yes