

The NC OpenBook site only lists a couple of school systems (LEAs) from the entire state. The site itself provides the explanation for the limited amount of information: "By Executive Order 4, the data included in NC OpenBook includes only purchases associated with a bid or state contract. All other purchases of goods and services are excluded from the report data set. Based on the timing of bid awards and the creation of a corresponding purchase order, not all purchase orders made through NC E-Procurement will match a bid created in IPS.

Additionally all purchases made through NC E-Procurement do not originate with a bid request through IPS and therefore will never have a bid number associated with the purchase order.

There are instances in which agencies must purchase goods and services outside of the NC E-Procurement system; in these cases the purchase and payment details are captured in NCAS but are not tracked to a NC E-Procurement purchase order."

Only very rarely do we need to make purchases that meet the legal requirements for a bid contract. Because the state has established a variety of bulk purchase contracts for a wide range of products, LEAs are able to meet their routine purchase needs by using state-contracted vendors without the expense and time of trying to individually bid out the purchase of items. That is actually a huge cost savings for the LEA. Additionally, our schools/departments are required to confirm that any purchase request submitted is directed to the lowest cost provider. In some cases, that is not the state-contracted provider. Our object is to be selective in what we order and to use only the lowest cost providers. If we must purchase an item that requires a bid contract, then we follow the state-established purchasing guidelines for the contract process.