

SIGNING AUTHORITY

Background:

The purpose of this Administrative Procedure is to delineate the roles and responsibilities, and to provide appropriate governance and authorization levels for the Division. Proper authorization of transactions is required to ensure adequate safeguarding of the Division's assets against loss or improper use, as well as to produce reliable financial records for internal and external reporting. All staff acting on behalf of the Division share in the overall responsibility for the sound stewardship of the Division's finances.

Definitions:

Capital Asset:

is an expenditure for a single item or system that provides services and benefits for more than one fiscal year and has a value of more than \$5,000. Capital assets are recorded individually by the Division and require special treatment upon disposal.

Capital Project:

is a capital asset with numerous payments to one or more vendors and/or is to be completed over an extended time frame.

Consultant Services Contract:

is a legally enforceable business agreement between two or more parties with mutual obligations related to services to be provided.

Grant Agreement:

is a standardized agreement used to award funds.

Job:

is a standardized role name and job description, including responsibilities, tasks and qualification requirements. There are many employees utilizing a single job title, such as Teacher.

Lease:

is a contract calling for the lessee (user) to pay the lessor (owner) for use of an asset.

Non-Compliant Transaction:

is a transaction that does not follow the signing authority procedures described herein.

Employment Personal Services Contract:

is a legal agreement, in which the skills or talents of an individual are material, such as professional services, between an individual employee and an employer that clarifies the terms

and conditions of employment. Payments to the individual are handled through Payroll and are typically not included in the [Classified Handbook](#) or [Teachers' Collective Agreement](#).

Position:

is employment for an individual at the Division under a pre-existing job title. Each employee fills a position—including part time and full time.

Procurement:

is the act of finding, acquiring and/or buying goods, services or works from an external source, often via a tendering or competitive-bidding process. The process is used to ensure the Division receives goods, services or works for the best possible price when aspects such as quality, quantity, time and location are compared. The Division has defined processes intended to promote fair and open competition while minimizing risk, such as exposure to fraud and collusion.

Property:

is any physical or intangible entity owned by a person or jointly owned by a group of people. Depending on the nature of the property, an owner has the right to consume, sell, rent, mortgage, transfer, exchange or destroy their property, and/or to exclude others from having these rights. Recognized types of property include real property (land and buildings), personal property (property owned by the Division that is not affixed to or associated with the land) and intellectual property (exclusive rights over artistic creations, inventions, etc.).

Purchase Card (P-Card):

is a corporate credit card.

Purchase Order:

is a buyer-generated document that authorizes a purchase transaction.

Revenue Contract:

is a contract to receive funds. This can include funds for goods or services rendered, grant applications and donation agreements.

Procedures:

1. All transactions will be authorized by staff with designated signing authority as per the [Signing Authority Matrix](#) (Appendix 514-A).
2. Unless otherwise specified, authority is delegated to a position as opposed to a person.
3. Unless otherwise specified, authority delegated to a position extends to any person acting in the position.
4. An acting or temporary delegation will be in writing and detail who is acting and for what effective dates.
5. Any person not authorized by virtue of this Administrative Procedure may not commit the Division to any activities outlined in this Administrative Procedure.

6. In applying the limits outlined in the [Signing Authority Matrix](#) (Appendix 514-A), the total value is calculated based on the value of the purchase (over the term of the contract – including extensions), after taxes and freight, and valued in Canadian dollars.
7. Staff with designated signing authority shall exercise the authority for their areas of responsibility (e.g., school, department, account, etc.), as assigned by the Superintendent, within the set limits, and/or within approved budgets. Responsibilities are outlined in the [Responsibility Matrix](#) (Appendix 514-B), and will be updated as needed.
8. Staff with designated signing authority shall comply with the intent of the Administrative Procedure. In particular, staff with designated signing authority shall not circumvent the established limits by subdividing purchases, invoices, contracts, expense reports or agreements into smaller amounts.
9. Staff with designated signing authority will avoid conflict of interest and shall not authorize transactions when they are the direct or indirect beneficiary. Another authorized staff member (typically of higher authority) will approve these transactions.
10. Staff with designated signing authority will be aware of and refer to all relevant Division administrative procedures and processes as well as external legislative requirements when exercising delegations of authority.
11. Notwithstanding a delegation of authority, staff with designated signing authority will bring any matter to the attention of the Superintendent or the Division if that matter has an unusually high risk factor, if it brings the activities of the Division under scrutiny or disrepute, or if it involves controversial matters.

Non-Compliant Transactions

12. All non-compliant transactions will be submitted to the Secretary-Treasurer. All non-compliant transactions must adhere to the following signing authority limits:
 - 12.1. Up to \$500,000: Secretary-Treasurer
 - 12.2. Up to \$2,500,000: Superintendent
 - 12.3. No Limit: Board of Trustees

Disbursement Authorization

13. Satisfactory evidence will be provided to assist the designated signing authority with approving expenditures. This includes supporting materials which are intended to convey evidence of receipt (e.g., packing slips). In cases of prepayment, supporting documentation must be provided, and payment terms must comply with any contract or agreement in place.
14. Payment of invoices within five per cent or \$5,000, whichever is lower, of an approved value (contract, purchase order, written agreement) is considered authorized, upon verification of receipt of goods. Payments exceeding this threshold require additional authorization as per the [Signing Authority Matrix](#) (Appendix 514-A).
15. Commitments and transactions will not be processed that are not approved in accordance with this Administrative Procedure.
16. Only when the underlying transaction, contract or agreement has been properly approved and satisfactory evidence is available that the obligation is due, shall the disbursement of Division funds be permitted.

Reference:

Section 52, 53, 68, 222, 225 *Education Act*

[Appendix 514-A: Signing Authority Matrix](#)

[Appendix 514-B: Responsibility Matrix](#)