

Gift Card Purchasing

With pre-approval through the Gift Card Request form, gift cards may be purchased and distributed to students, families, and staff to support a “proper public purpose”, including but not limited to student incentives, recognizing student achievements, and staff appreciation.

This document provides information in the following areas:

- [Gift Card Guidance](#)
- [Gift Card Request Process](#)
- [Gift Card Request Form](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)

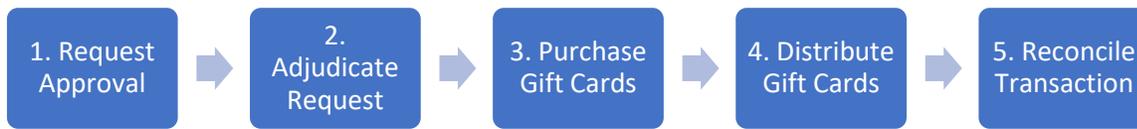
If you need support, please contact your Finance Partner.

Gift Card Guidance

- Gift cards should be purchased in nominal denominations (i.e., between \$5.00 and \$10.00 per card); however, larger denominations may be requested through the Gift Card Request Form.
- Gift cards should be purchased for businesses where there is little risk of inappropriate use (i.e., for purchases of alcohol, tobacco, and lottery).
- Gift cards can be purchased using a purchase order (PO), purchasing card (p-card), or personal credit card with an expense reimbursement request.
 - An increase to a p-card limit should be requested if the aggregate purchase exceeds the single transaction limit. This request can be made within the Gift Card Request Form.
 - Expense reimbursements are limited to \$250.00. You may not use multiple reimbursement requests or spend authorizations to exceed the \$250.00 limit.
- Gift cards are not allowable on all funding sources (i.e., Federal Title IA) so confirm allowability if proposing to use non-General Fund sources.
- Gift card requests should be made for each unique reason (i.e., one request for students who achieve a weekly reading goal and another request for a student of the month), but the gift cards may be distributed over multiple weeks or months.
- Gift cards should be distributed during the fiscal year purchased.
- Gift cards provided to staff are considered taxable income by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and will be included as wages on employees’ W-2 statements by the Finance Department’s Payroll team.
- Any violation of this guidance will be subject to progressive discipline by the employee’s manager and subject to prohibition from future approval for gift card purchases from the Finance Department.

Gift Card Request Process

There are five (5) steps involved with purchasing gift cards:



The following table provides more detail about each step of the process and identifies the roles and responsibilities at each step.

Step	Action	Responsible Party	When Action Occurs	Additional Notes
1	Enter a request to purchase gift cards through the Gift Card Request form	Cost Center Manager or Buyer ¹	Prior to purchasing gift cards	Gift Card Request Form
2	Review gift card requests and approve, deny, or get additional information	Finance Partner and Chief Financial Officer	Within 48 hours of receiving a gift card request approval notification	Reviewers should check for available budget, proper public purpose, allowability on funding source ² , etc. Requestors will receive notifications when requests are approved, sent back, or denied.
3	Buy gift cards	Cost Center Manager or Buyer	After the gift card request is approved by the Finance Partner and Chief Financial Officer	May use a purchase order, p-card, or personal credit card with expense reimbursement. Attached a PDF of the approved request to purchase orders, p-card verifications, and expense reimbursement requests. Following all other applicable procedures for completing transactions for these purchasing methods.

¹ Cost Center Manager is typically a school principal, department head, or Chief. A Program Manager and Program Buyer can also initiate a request.

² The Financial Partner may need to check with the applicable grant manager as to whether gift cards are allowable on relevant grants prior to approving or denying.

Step	Action	Responsible Party	When Action Occurs	Additional Notes
4	Distribute gift cards	Cost Center Manager	After purchasing gift cards	Must document who receives each gift card and attach the documentation to either the p-card verification or shared with Finance Partner to store in the gift card request form database.
5	Reconcile gift card requests	Finance Partner	After gift cards are distributed	To the gift card request database, add associated PO/CON/PCV/EXP number, documentation of gift card recipients, and mark requests as complete once all documentation is received.

Gift Card Request Form

The gift card request form is located here: [Gift Card Request Form](#). The following table identifies the fields within the form and provides guidance on completing each field.

Field	Guidance
Requestor	The name of the Cost Center Manager or Buyer submitting the request to purchase gift cards.
Requestor Email	The email address of the Cost Center Manager or Buyer submitting the request to purchase gift cards.
Department / School	The name of the school or department requesting to purchase and distribute the gift cards.
Finance Partner	Using the dropdown, select the Finance Partner who supports the school or department.
Fund, Cost Center, Function, Program, and Grant/Gift	The budget account codes that will be used to purchase the gift cards. Grant/Gift are only require if the gift cards are being purchased through a gift or grant.
Gift Card Recipients	Identify whether the gift cards are for Students/Families or Staff. If the gift cards are for staff, the value of the gift card will be reported on employees' W-2s as taxable income.
Number of Gift Cards	Identify the number of gift cards being requested.
Amount per Gift Card	Identify the value of each gift card being requested.
Gift Card Location/Business	Identify the business(es) the gift cards are being purchased for (i.e., redeemed at). This may be different than where the gift cards are purchased from (e.g., a Starbucks gift card may be purchased from a Giant Eagle location).

Purpose / Reason for the Gift Cards	Provide information about what the gift cards are being used for. This will establish the proper public purpose.
Purchase Method	Using the dropdown, select how the gift cards will be purchased.
Do You Need a P-Card Limit Increase? <i>(only activates if p-card is selected in the Purchase Method field)</i>	Check this box if the aggregate purchase from a single vendor will exceed the per transaction limit.

Frequently Asked Questions

The section provides answers to specific scenarios.

1. If I have an approved Gift Card Request to purchase five (5) gift cards for a reading incentive, but only ended up purchasing four (4) gift cards, can I use the approval to purchase a 5th gift card for another purpose?
 - No. You should submit a new gift card request for the other purpose. When the initial four (4) cards are distributed, please provide the recipient documentation to your Finance Partner so that reconcile and close the request.
2. If I purchase five (5) gift cards for a reading incentive, but only ended up using four (4) gift cards, can I repurpose the 5th card for another purpose?
 - Yes, but notify your Finance Partner you only used four (4) gift cards for the initial reason and submit a new gift card request form for the new purpose.
3. I have an approved Gift Card Request to purchase gift cards worth \$10 each; however, now I only want to purchase gift cards worth \$5 each. What should I do?
 - If you need to modify anything in your approved request, please contact your Finance Partner and they will seek approval from the CFO to revise the original request and make the changes in the gift card request database.
4. Can I use multiple payments methods to purchase gift cards?
 - Please use only one payment method (i.e., purchase order, p-card, or expense reimbursement) per request. This will make it easier to track, manage, and (if necessary) audit.
5. Does the Gift Card Request form check whether I have budget available?
 - No, you need to confirm available budget prior to requesting to purchase gift cards. Your Finance Partner can provide support checking for available budget.
6. Can I purchase gift cards for staff recognition and appreciation?
 - Board Policy DO and GBI allow for the purchase of gifts for staff; however, any approval to spending district funds on staff appreciation will be approved by the Chief Financial Officer in collaboration with the Chief Executive Officer. Gift card requests for staff should be submitted through the Gift Card Request form; other gifts for staff should be requested via email to the Chief Financial Officer. Gift cards for staff are considered taxable income and will be reported on employees' W-2 statements.