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State Title I Office

Purchasing Software for iPads

The state Title I office has received requests from districts to purchase Apple gift cards in order to have credit available for loading educational software, books and games onto Apple iPads. This has been deemed an unallowable use of funds since purchasing a generic gift card could be easily abused as there are no securities or safety precautions to ensure these funds are spent on downloadable applications. However, we recognize the need to establish an allowable method for easily purchasing this type of educational software, books, and games for use in Title I programs.

The state Title I office has spoken with an Apple Education Representative to determine an allowable way for districts to do volume purchasing of software and programs for their Apple iPads. Apple has an online store, the App Store, where educational software, books, and games can be purchased through a Volume Purchase Program. The App Store Volume Purchase Program allows districts to establish an account with Apple to conduct volume voucher-based purchasing, which allows for a better purchase price, ability to track purchased applications, and provides purchasing securities of educational software, books and games from the App Store. Apple has guidance on their volume purchasing program for educational institutions available at www.apple.com/itunes/education.

Districts intending to use funds to make purchases from the App Store MUST ensure the activity was outlined in the district's consolidated application or budget revision. Making these purchases without state level approval puts the district at risk for having to pick up the costs of these type of purchase at the district's expense. The state Title I office will be conducting ledger monitoring in the spring of 2011 and will include some districts that are using their funds for volume purchasing.

Below is a summary of how the App Store Volume Purchase Program works:

- Step 1: District establishes an email account just for purchasing applications through App Store Volume Purchase Program. This account is held by a district Authorized Apple Purchaser (i.e., Title I coordinator, business manager, etc.). App Store Volume Purchase Program accounts are separate accounts from personal iTunes accounts and will not be able to download non-educational applications, music, or any other unallowable content.
- Step 2: When Title I school personnel find an application they would like to purchase for students, they communicate this to the district's Authorized Apple Purchaser.
- Step 3: The district's Authorized Apple Purchaser would review the application, determine if the purchase is allowable and see if other Title I school personnel would like it for their iPads.
- Step 4: The district Authorized Apple Purchaser would go online to the App Store and purchase the application using the district's volume purchasing voucher.
- Step 5: The App Store sends the district Authorized Apple Purchaser a specific code tied to the application; the code allows the material to be downloaded.
- Step 6: The district Authorized Apple Purchaser then distributes this code to the Title I school personnel for redemption at the App Store.

This process allows districts the flexibility to easily purchase downloadable educational software, books, and games for use in Title I programs. In addition, it has built in securities and accountability measures to ensure the funding is used appropriately.