

CASE STUDY: Education

College Place Schools streamline operations with Amazon Business

Overview

College Place School District uses Amazon Business to simplify purchasing, reclaiming hours of valuable time to spend on its core mission—educating students.



Simplify, streamline
purchasing



Reduce
administrative workloads



Empower
teaching staff

Nestled in Washington's Walla Walla Valley, the College Place School District educates a diverse population of around 1,400 students — from kindergarten all the way to 12th grade. The district's goal is to provide students with positive, personalized educational experiences where they feel respected, valued and inspired to learn.

To achieve those goals, College Place must do more than provide students with engaging learning environments — it must also provide teachers and staff with the supplies they need to do their jobs properly.

A complex purchasing process

Originally, major purchasing for the district was handled centrally by the Director of Business and Finance, Julie James. From paper, paints and pencils, to furniture, consumables and cleaning supplies, every cent spent was originally executed through James' central office using the Skyward Student Management Suite. And, regardless of whether teachers were buying chalk or computers, it was a time-consuming process.





"Teachers would fill out a requisition form and submit it to the District Office," James says. "We would enter it into the system. They would approve it. It would then go to their supervisor for approval, and then to me for approval ... it probably took about two weeks for anything to happen."

Integration provides the answer

The challenge was twofold: teachers didn't want to wait weeks for essential supplies, and the amount of time spent processing orders was detracting from other responsibilities.

Frustrated, teachers were starting to take matters into their own hands, looking for cheaper, more convenient ways to spend their budgets — including buying on Amazon.com

"Our staff wanted to go to Amazon so they could get more for their money," James says. "I had one science teacher who charged about \$20,000 worth of Amazon supplies to his own credit card.

"If teachers can't get their supplies, or they're backlogged trying to get books, it's the kids who suffer. Amazon Business has helped us put an end to that and refocus on our mission."

JULIE JAMES

**Director of Business and Finance,
College Place School District**

I started thinking, why can't we get Amazon connected to Skyward so we could do all of this more easily?"

That's when the school district turned to Amazon Business for its purchasing needs.

Amazon Business offered teachers and staff the same seamless purchasing experiences they would get outside of work and provided the district with business-only pricing, purchasing approval workflows and seamless integration with the Skyward suite.

Julie James turned to Amazon Education Customer Advisor, Erica Heffernan, for help integrating Amazon Business with Skyward.

"Erica was very, very instrumental in our adoption," recalls James. "She was just so patient and kept a really positive attitude. She called and emailed frequently to find out how things were going. It was a great partnership."

A familiar purchasing experience

Once Skyward integration was complete, College Place teachers and staff were able to streamline their purchasing by accessing an easy, familiar Amazon shopping experience through Skyward. Now they can shop around for the best prices to make the most of their budgets, and orders are processed and delivered in days, not weeks.

"Amazon Business gives our teachers the ultimate combination of convenience, price, selection and speed," James reveals. "They have a wide variety of products that they can access from anywhere. And they can get some of them within a day, which is huge for us."

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Director of Business and Finance,
College Place School District

Often with new technologies, employee adoption can be a struggle. With Amazon Business that wasn't the case.

“We had one teacher who was adamant that she wanted to do her own ordering. When we got the system up, she was delighted. She called me, emailed me, told everyone in the district how excited she was about it and how easy it was. She's not the only one, either,” says James.

New, efficient, repeatable processes

“The time we save using Amazon Business is tremendous,” James says. “If you're an individual ordering your own stuff, it takes just a few minutes. It's easy. We were spending hours and days processing requests here at the office, which we now have back.”

With instant visibility into past orders, it's now easier for James and her team to gain insights into how frequently certain

products are ordered and establish repeatable ordering processes for the entire school district. James and her staff can easily see every single purchase made through Amazon Business, which saves them time and fosters more strategic spending decisions.

Ordering on Amazon Business gives College Place teachers and staff more time to focus on what's most important: their students.

“We can't focus on kids if we've got other things holding us up,” James says. “If teachers can't get their supplies, or they're backlogged trying to get books, it's the kids who suffer. Amazon Business has helped us put an end to that and refocus on our mission.”



NAME: COLLEGE PLACE SCHOOL DISTRICT
INDUSTRY: EDUCATION
LOCATION: COLLEGE PLACE, WA
FOUNDED: 2016
WEBSITE: [HTTPS://WWW.CPPS.ORG](https://www.cpps.org)