

## City of Norfolk Public Schools, Virginia

Saving Time *and* Money Leveraging Munis® Integrated Software with PCards and eSchoolmall  
*Winner of 2009 Munis Public Sector Excellence Award*

**Industry:** School District

**Budget:** \$400 million

**Employees:** 5,400

**Location:** Norfolk, VA

**Students:** 36,000

**Tyler Products Used:** Munis Integrated Applications

**Schools/Other Facilities:** 62

**Years as a Tyler Client:** 4

**The Facts:** Norfolk, Virginia, founded in 1682, has a long maritime and naval heritage of over 300 years. Today, Norfolk is a city of 234,403 residents, and home to the world's largest naval base. With more than 100 diverse neighborhoods, the importance of an excellent education is clear, and Norfolk Public Schools fits the need superbly. In fact, two of Norfolk High Schools, Maury and Granby, rate in Newsweek's top 1,500 in the nation, and Oakwood Elementary School was selected as a nationwide 2009 Blue Ribbon School. Focused on excellence in academics, athletics, citizenship and community involvement, the schools deliver on their vision ... to provide a nationally recognized, globally competitive education for all Norfolk Public Schools students.

The Purchases & Supply Department at Norfolk Public Schools has been recognized for the following achievements:

- Achievement of Excellence in Procurement (AEP) Award - sponsored by the National Purchasing Institute (NPI)
- Outstanding Agency Accreditation Achievement Award (OA<sup>4</sup>) – sponsored by the National Institute of Governmental Purchasers (NIGP)

### Contact:

**Christopher Steele**, Senior Director Purchases and Supply Department | [www.nps.k12.va.us](http://www.nps.k12.va.us)

### Key Challenges

- Eliminate manual entry and processing, and reduce cycle time starting with requisitions and maximizing the utilization of electronic requisition workflow and PCards
- Increase visibility for requisitions, POs, contracts, invoices, checks, tracking, and multi-year contracts
- Eliminate inefficient vendor ordering process for approved items
- Implement timely credit card posting to financial system for budget/expense tracking

### Benefits: Financial and Beyond

- Utilizing PCard for purchasing and payments decreased check production more than 60%, and allowed for a reduction in accounts payable clerks (PCard is the preferred payment method for high-volume, low-dollar-amount purchases such as supplies, books, subscription, etc.)
- Decreased purchase orders with increased use of PCards, and increased use of blanket purchase orders and multi-year contracts resulted in the elimination of a senior buyer position (converted to PCard Program Administrator).

- Realized further cost reduction by eliminating all purchasing clerks in Purchasing who previously keyed in manual requisitions (a reduction of total Purchasing staff by 30%).
- Improved visibility of approved, completed vendor catalogue items including textbook publishers approved by School Board

### In Their Own Words:

"Implementing Munis significantly increased our organizational efficiency. We've moved from a manual, labor intensive workflow to an electronic one saving time and money."

— Christopher Steele,  
Senior Director Purchases and Supply Department

...continued on reverse

## City of Norfolk Public Schools Best Practices

- Employ electronic workflow for requisitions, purchase orders, PO change orders, contracts, contract change orders, PO receiving and invoice approvals
- Increase visibility of procurement status for schools and departments resulting in decreased phone calls and improved customer service
- Integrate eSchoolMall with on-line ordering from approved vendor catalogs, utilizing P-Cards and including all school textbook adoption publishers

### Why Tyler?

- Tyler's Munis financial management solution offered unsurpassed integration, flexibility, and an excellent return on investment.
- Tyler's experience, excellent customer service, expertise in both technology and knowledge of the public sector and history of delivering software and services on time and on budget.
- As the nation's largest sole provider of software and services for the public sector, providing solutions for Financial, Document, Pension, and School Management; Land & Vital Records; Appraisal & Tax; Courts & Justice; Public Safety; and Citizen Services, Tyler was the clear choice for Norfolk Public Schools in Virginia.

### The challenge: Reduce manual processing and excess workload

Norfolk Public Schools Purchases & Supply Department's manual processing for all functions created an environment of excessive cost, inefficient processes and long cycle-times for activities.

The "REQ to CHECK" process was cumbersome. Paper forms with subsequent key entry contributed to this challenge when starting a requisition. The lack of requisition, PO, contract, invoice, and check visibility and tracking presented a challenge every step of the way. Additionally, the traditional check payment process was costly and time consuming a

direct result of the high level of manual entry. Lack of timely credit card posting to the financial system led to challenging budget and expense tracking.

The vendor ordering process for school approved items was inefficient. And again, visibility was an issue with approved, completed vendor catalog items, including textbook publishers approved by the School Board, and multi-year contracts.

Everyone in the Purchases & Supply Department, from the senior director, to the senior auditor, to the buyers, knew they needed help.

Utilizing Tyler's Munis Enterprise Resource Planning solution met their need ... and then some.

### The perfect solution: Integration and efficiency

In today's economic climate schools are under tremendous pressure to streamline processes and to find cost savings wherever possible. Creating efficiencies in processes and reduction in the workforce is often a reasonable approach. However, without a powerful and flexible ERP system, this is difficult to nearly impossible.

Tyler's Munis ERP solution offered the perfect solution for Norfolk Public Schools' Purchases & Supply Department. Munis' integrated and interfaced financial applications simplified and streamlined all processes and provided budget relief. Full utilization of Munis significantly reduced employee workload and operating cost by eliminating manual processes while implementing electronic processing across the board. For example, considerable cost savings were realized when this electronic implementation eliminated the need to manually key information into requisitions. This allowed the department to eliminate all purchasing clerks.

### Saving Time and Money – a Clear Return on Investment

Implementing Munis had a significant impact on the procurement function. Maximizing the use of Munis' powerful modules and integration produced an excellent ROI.

Electronic workflow for requisitions, purchase orders and change orders, contracts and change orders, PO receiving and invoice approvals allowed staff to manage the process effectively, and in a timely manner. Because the cycle time from requisition to the award of the purchase order and contact was shortened, staff workload was reduced and allowed further cost containment. Improved customer service was a real benefit as well.

The integration of Munis to eSchoolMall vendor catalogs, including loading all school textbook adoption publishers, offered a simple streamlined approach. With the ease of on-line shopping, Norfolk Public Schools employees can shop on eSchoolMall authorized catalogs with contract pricing with a purchase order or a P-Card. eSchoolMall "shopping carts" are easily integrated directly into Munis, where the shopping cart is added to the Munis requisition, and the requisition follows the same workflow as the non eSchoolMall catalogue requisitions. This combination of Procurement Process Automation seamlessly streamlines all processes while mirroring existing procedures. Rapid Return On Investment make it a practical and highly cost-effective investment for school districts of all sizes.

With the increased utilization of PCard for purchases and payments, the department was able to reduce checks by more than 60%. This allowed a further reduction in staff fewer accounts payable clerks were required for the same tasks.

Additionally, purchase orders were reduced with the increased use of PCards, and increased use of blanket purchase orders and multi-year term contracts. This allowed the conversion of a senior buyer position to oversee the exponential growth in the P-Card program and the elimination of procurement clerks (a 30% reduction in total procurement staff).

After four years of increased productivity, efficiency and significant cost savings, Norfolk Public Schools know they made the right choice with Tyler's Munis.