

## 2015 Category Two Internal Networks Statewide Program FAQ

November 4, 2014

**1. What is the goal of this program?**

A sustainable model for building, funding, maintaining and monitoring internal networks. Ultimately this will require expanding the School Connectivity Initiative appropriation. The goal of the 2015 program is to kickstart the process of obtaining state funding to cover internal networks.

**2. Will only High Schools be accepted into this program?**

No. But, since a finite amount of matching funds can be allocated, we may need to develop priorities beyond discount rate, technical need, and age of equipment to allot the limited funds.

**3. How much State funding is available?**

\$4.6M of State funds in 2015. This number could go up pending the result of some other budgeted RttT Education Cloud RFPs. At the statewide average of 78% E-Rate discount, \$4.6M in State funds translates to a total of \$20M of funding for 2015.

**4. Why do I have to complete a survey for my schools that already have high density WiFi?**

We need to know what the age is for budgeting purposes. We expect the FCC Category Two program to extend to five years. There are FCC rules regarding the age of equipment that is replaced, to which we must adhere. Also, your WiFi coverage may not be sufficient to meet the demanding requirements of fully digital learning methodologies expected in the next few years.

**5. Will you be dictating what vendor and model numbers we use?**

No. A competitive bidding process is required by the FCC and the State procurement laws. We expect multiple vendors to be awarded and will be selecting models that are suitable to high density, one to one learning environments. Ultimately LEAs will select the exact devices installed. We are requesting your model numbers so that new gear is compatible with existing installs.

**6. Are you going to force us into a managed service?**

No. While we believe manage services will be the best fit for many districts in the long run, given that we currently lack recurring funding and the E-Rate rules are subject to change we do not foresee extensive managed services opportunities this year.

If you are interested in doing this, please contact the Friday Institute as this is possibly something that could be done for the 2016 E-rate cycle and at statewide scale.

**7. Can we procure WiFi and installation from a single vendor (turn-key solution)?**

Yes, if a qualified vendor responds to the RFP.

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**8. I've got plenty of WiFi gear, but my Wired LAN is a mess. Can you help?**

Yes. The program has four areas of focus, all covered in the E-Rate Category Two eligible services list: Access Points, Wired Networks for AP Connectivity, Cable Installation, Configuration Services.

**9. What about Charter Schools?**

We will be addressing charters through different avenues, most likely a one-time allotment.

**10. E-Rate Centric Questions:**

I'm planning to file my own 470. Will this interfere with your project? No.

Can I be on multiple 470s? Yes.

Who will be filing the 471? Your LEA. DPI will not file any Category Two 471s.

Who owns the gear? Your LEA.

**11. I'm planning to do a wireless project anyway. What can I do to align my work with yours? (Whether I'm funded or not)**

If your district already has a project in the works we suggest you continue to move forward. However, we encourage districts to align their work with the E-Rate Cycle. (i.e. work should begin after April 1, 2015) Regardless of whether your project is funded by RttT funds you should still seek your E-Rate discount.

**12. I've already bought gear. Can I be reimbursed for the non-discount portion anyway?**

With the limitations of our current non-recurring funds we will not be able to reimburse existing deployments. However, our long range goal is recurring funding that will benefit all districts throughout a five year cycle.

**13. My district only receives a 60% E-rate discount. Why should I participate in this program?**

Use our RFP and competitive bid even if they are a 60% discount school since we meet the requirements for process. Also mention we will work with MCNC to provide guidance on configuration tips and standards to improve performance.