Idaho State
E-rate Briefing
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Why Does E-rate Funding Matter So Much?

• Internet access is mission critical to education, and...
• It requires enterprise-grade networks (i.e. not inexpensive)
• E-rate helps meet the need for faster Internet access
  › Largest single source of EdTech funding in US for K-12 schools
  › Public, private, charter schools; (nearly all participate)
  › Public libraries also qualify
• Offers discounts of 20%-90% on eligible goods and services
• Annual program cap: ≈ $3.9 billion (inflation adjusted)
E-rate Funding: High Stakes Opportunity

• Stringent bidding rules and procedures
• Many deadlines and forms to complete
• Recent reform creates new learning curves
• Lengthy timelines to receive funding and keep paperwork
  › Projects are delayed pending funding award
  › Payments may be denied or delayed
  › Record-keeping stretches over 10+ years
• Failures result in repayment, fines, and/or incarceration
About Funds For Learning

• Focused exclusively on E-rate compliance
• Experience preparing $1.6+ billion requests
• Nationwide client base since 1997
• Developer of E-rate Manager® system
• FFL clients represent 6+ million students; 12,000 sites
• Statewide support for AL, AR, DC, OK, and VI
Two Categories of Discounts

• **TO CAMPUS: Category 1 (20% - 90%)**
  › Telecommunications data services
  › Voice services (but being phased out)
  › Internet access

• **ON CAMPUS: Category 2 (20% - 85%)**
  › Internal connections (and maintenance)
  › Managed internal broadband service (“managed Wi-Fi”)
  › Subject to 5-year funding cap per site
Idaho E-rate $8.4 million/yr (avg past 10 years)
Idaho Receives $35 E-rate per Student (FY2015)

Per Student
- National average = $48
- Regional average = $34 (ID, MT, WY, UT, NV, OR, WA)

Discount Rate
- State Average = 74%
- Nat’l Average = 73%
... our students are on devices such as iPads or Chromebooks everyday...

... require consistent internet access to complete individualized lessons and check ins.
Increases in state funding for technology, along with E-Rate funding, have:

- allowed us to develop and maintain tech infrastructure demanded today
- helped our tech budget go further
- increased bandwidth up to 10X
- created sustainable replacement cycles
E-rate 2017 Fast Facts

• Discounts available for purchased fiber optic WANs
• Reduced support for telephone services (discount minus 60%)
• E-rate Portal “EPC” Creates Challenges
  › Complicates and slows down process
  › Delays funding commitments
• Process getting harder
  › Nationwide: 60% of applicant use consultants
  › Idaho: 23% of applicants use consultants

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How Do States Support Applicants?

• Single statewide application
  › Opportunity: Decreased admin burden for schools (*maybe*)
  › Danger: All-or-nothing; Challenge: One size rarely fits all

• 5% match for fiber optic wide area network buildouts

• State master contracts that are E-rate competitively bid

• Additional resources for training, listservs and helpdesks