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**Request for Proposals for Wide Area Network Service**

## E-rate Form 470 #210000533

**Questions Due Date: September 16,2020**

**Questions must be submitted to** [**https://forms.gle/MYx4a4pKGNioSSX78**](https://forms.gle/MYx4a4pKGNioSSX78)**. E-mails and phone calls will not be accepted. Q & A will be posted in EPC as a 470 RFP document.**

**Due Date: October 09, 2020 4:00 P.M. – Proposals will not be accepted after this date. Sealed responses should be mailed or delivered to Adam Sellers, 817 Washington Street Whiteville, NC 28472. All responses should have 470 #210000533 on the envelope. Two paper copies and two USB flash drives with electronic copies are requested.**

**Public Bid Opening Date: October 12, 2020**

**Award Announcement Date: November 03, 2020**

**Section 1: Overview**

The Columbus County School district is requesting proposals for symmetrical leased lit fiber transport, without Internet access, for delivery of wide area network (WAN) services to the district. Service is expected to originate at the district hub location and be delivered to each site in **Appendix A.** The new service is being planned to begin on July 1, 2021 which represents the expiration of the current WAN service.

1. A 5-year contract options, with two (2) one-year voluntary extensions, will be considered.
2. Pricing is requested for both 1 Gbps for each location and for 10 Gbps at the hub location.

**Section 2: Service Requests**

1. Applicant is seeking bids for a fully managed WAN solution. WAN connections are point-to-point fiber connections that connect individual instructional / non-instructional facilities in the same school district. See Section 3 for solution requirements.
2. Network Design and Construction Routes
   1. Applicant will consider traditional network designs (such as hub and spoke) or alternative proposals. The applicant’s stated decision criteria (outlined in the RFP) will be used to determine if an award is made as a result of this RFP. The applicant has, in accordance with E-rate guidelines, rated cost of service as the highest weighted factor in its decision criteria.
   2. Due to current and future bandwidth needs, respondents are encouraged to provide dedicated infrastructure to Applicant. Designs are encouraged to utilize the private fiber approach, where there exists no other aggregation or third-party equipment on fiber strands between sites and modulating equipment at each site is dedicated to Applicant and not shared in any way with other customers. If this is not possible, then designs should limit the use of shared infrastructure as much as possible.
   3. Respondents should clearly illustrate proposed network design and construction routes. Respondents should show evidence that they looked at alternate routes for the build and should provide narrative language supporting rationale for chosen build route(s).
   4. Design must provide resiliency to ensure a single fiber cut or site failure will not affect the rest of the WAN connections.
   5. Applicant is not advocating or mandating any preconceived network design or construction route and leaves this decision up to the vendor to present their best solution while recognizing the cited termination locations.

**Section 3: Solution Specifications**

1. Wide Area Network
   1. Applicant must have dedicated, symmetrical transport bandwidth of 1 Gbps between the designated endpoints.
   2. The solution must be scalable to 40 Gbps.
   3. Contract options are requested for 60-month terms of service and two optional 12-month term extensions.
   4. Each respondent is required to complete the attached pricing sheet Appendix D with this RFP.
      1. Monthly recurring cost including taxes and fees, and any additional non-recurring costs are **required** to be broken out and listed separately.
      2. Respondents are free to propose alternate pricing terms provided they have also included pricing in the requested format.
      3. No increased pricing will be allowed during the term of the quoted NRC and MRC rate in each pricing cell of the matrix.
   5. All costs, including state and local taxes and federal fees, required to deliver the proposed solution must be included in the bid.  If there are charges for static IP addresses, they should be included. By submitting a bid, the respondent certifies that it has engineered a full solution including all monthly recurring charges and all installation charges. Costs added to the quote after the respondent has submitted their bid are solely the responsibility of the respondent and not the applicant.
   6. If a bandwidth upgrade is requested mid-contract the term length does not reset or renew. For example, if an upgrade occurs in month 20 of a 36-month contract, then 16 months of service must remain on the contract at the new bandwidth before a contract renewal is available.
   7. Site additions or deletions will be addressed via a contract amendment.
   8. Disconnect or downgrade fees must be included in the proposal.
   9. All solutions must adhere to the Service Level Agreement (SLA) terms in Section 4.

**Section 4: Service Level Agreement**

1. Proposed services must meet the following specifications:
   1. The provider will make all reasonable efforts to ensure 99.99% network availability of each circuit.
   2. .25% frame/packet loss commitment
   3. 25ms round trip network latency commitment
   4. 10ms network jitter commitment
   5. There is no right of provider to limit or throttle the capacity of the circuit at any time for any reason
   6. Vendor stated commitment is to respond to any outage within two (2) hours and a four (4) hour restoration of service.
2. Network operations center: Solution will provide customer support functions including problem tracking, resolution and escalation support management on a 24x7x365 basis. Customer has the right and is encouraged to call concerning any problems that may arise relative to its connection with vendor provided services.
3. Trouble reporting and response: Upon interruption, degradation or loss of service, Customer may contact Vendor by defined method with a response based on trouble level. Upon contact from the Customer, the Vendor support team will initiate an immediate response to resolve any Customer issue. Customer will receive rapid feedback on trouble resolution, including potential resolution time.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Length of Service Outage** | **Credit is the following**  **percentage of monthly recurring cost** |
| Less than 2 hours | No Credit |
| Greater than two (2) hours and less than four (4) hours | 5% |
| Greater than four (4) hours and less than eight (8) hours | 10% |
| Greater than eight (8) hours and less than twelve (12) hours | 15% |
| Greater than twelve (12) hours and less than sixteen (16) hours | 20% |
| Greater than sixteen (16) hours and less than twenty-four (24) hours | 35% |
| Greater than twenty-four (24) hours | 50% |

1. Escalation: In the event that service has not been restored in a timely manner, or the Customer does not feel that adequate attention has been allocated, the Customer can escalate the trouble resolution by request. A list of escalation contacts will be provided when implementation schedule is completed.
2. Resolution: The Customer will be notified immediately once the problem is resolved and will be asked for verbal closure of the incident.
3. Trouble reporting, escalation and resolution: A detailed trouble reporting, escalation and resolution plan will be provided to the district.
4. Measurement: Time starts from the time the Customer contacts vendor and identifies the problem. Credits for outages should be the following:
5. Reports: Upon request, an incident report will be made available to the Customer within five (5) working days of resolution of the trouble.
6. Link performance per segment: The service will maintain the proposed link performance throughout the term of the contract.
7. Historical uptime: Provide aggregate uptime statistics for your proposed service in the geographic area encompassing Applicant.

**Section 5: General Terms for All Proposals**

1. **Failure to include any requested information noted as required by the respondent is grounds for disqualification.**
2. Description of Proposal
   1. All sites must be included in the bid. Failure to include all site names and addresses in a bid option could be considered ground for disqualification.
   2. Respondent will provide a description of their proposal for all services and solutions.
   3. Description will include an overview of the proposal, any deviations from the requested architecture, design or requirements, assumptions made, and other detail Applicant may find useful or necessary (or could differentiate the solution from a competing proposal).
   4. Service Provider must have a USAC 498 ID that is shown on the proposal.
   5. Service Provider must have a FCC Form 473 (Service Provider Annual Certification (SPAC) Form) to certify that they will comply with Schools and Libraries (E-rate) Program rules.
   6. Service provider must have a SPAC Form on file for each funding year covered during the contract and optional extensions.
   7. Service Provider must include an option to continue service month by month after expiration of service to ensure the district is not without a Wide Area Network while transitioning to another provider.
3. Site names and addresses
   1. If their solution is chosen, respondents are required to include sites names and addresses on the contract.
4. Reselling and subcontracting
   1. Any respondent who intends to resell or subcontract a lit service from a 3rd party must supply proof in writing that said party can provide service at all proposed Applicant locations.
   2. If, at any point following the bid submission, any changes from the 3rd party alter the costs or significantly change scope of proposed service then Applicant will not be liable for the cost increase and reserves the right to disqualify the bid and cancel any signed contracts without penalty.
5. Timeline
   1. For each response, respondents must include a timeline for bringing all sites online.
   2. For each response, respondents must include a detailed summary of the process including expected downtime you would use to transition over from our existing Wide Area Network to the proposed Wide Area Network
   3. The district requires that the Wide Area Network be built out and ready for service by the start of the contract (July 1, 2021).
   4. Vendor agrees to pay the cost to previous provider, if Wide Area Network is not ready for service by the start of the contract (July 1, 2021).

1. Demarcation
   1. All solutions must terminate service or infrastructure in the demarcation point at each site specified in the pricing sheet.
   2. Solutions bringing service to the property line but not to the demarcation point are not acceptable.

Respondent must specify specific demarcation setup included in base fees, e.g. wall mounted CPE and CAT6a handoff, rack mount patch panel, etc.

1. Network Diagram
   1. For each response, respondents must include a network diagram displaying the paths to be used to serve each endpoint.
   2. Diagrams must show if circuits are routed through any aggregation hubs, equipment, or third-party facilities between hub site and each endpoint.
      1. If this detailed information cannot be supplied, then at a minimum the quantity of each must be supplied in order to provide a picture of potential latency.
2. References
   1. For each response, respondent must provide 3 references from current or recent customers (preferably K-12) with projects equivalent to the size of Applicant. – Appendix B
3. Bulk Upload Spread
   1. The selected Service Provider will create the Bulk Upload Spreadsheets available for the E-rate Form 471.
4. Complete and include the checklist on Appendix C.
5. Complete and include WAN Pricing Worksheet.xlsx.
6. E-rate Program Integrity Assurance (PIA) Review
   1. If their solution is chosen, respondents are required to promptly provide Applicant with any information being requested as part of PIA review.
   2. Vendors may assist applicants with preparing funding requests or responding to PIA questions and may speak directly with PIA reviewers.
   3. **All responses must agree, in writing, to this section in the Appendix C Checklist. Failure to answer is grounds for disqualification.**
7. Required Notice to Proceed and Funding Availability
   1. Applicant will follow the purchasing policies of the Applicant Board and requirements and procedures of the FCC’s E-rate program as administered by the Universal Service Administrative Company to be eligible for all available funding.
   2. The implementation of any associated contracts resulting from this competitive bid process will be dependent on the district's’ issuance of a written Notice to Proceed.
   3. E-rate funding notification alone will not signify Notice to Proceed. The district will have the right to allow the contract to expire without implementation if appropriate funding (including any state matching funds) does not come available.

**Section 6: Evaluation Criteria**

1. **Leased Lit Fiber (with or without Internet access)**

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| **Criteria includes but not limited to the following:** |
| E-rate eligible recurring and one-time circuit costs |
| Complete bid submission |
| Prior Experience with Company |
| Proposed contract terms and conditions |
| E-rate ineligible recurring or one-time costs |
| Provider references |

1. **Criteria Explanation**
   1. E-rate eligible costs: the total cost of ownership for the eligible components of the proposed service. Total cost of ownership takes into account all one-time and recurring costs. Note that E-rate eligible costs refers to the pre-discount cost of the solution, not the post-discount portion of costs that are the responsibility of the Applicant. This criterion must be the highest weighted per E-rate program rules.
   2. Complete bid submission: Bids concisely address Applicant’s requirements, as set forth in the RFP, and do not contain a significant amount of corporate boilerplate marketing information
   3. Quality of previous experiences with the company: Support, services delivered, personnel interactions, billing, etc.
   4. Proposed contract terms and conditions: Proposed contract has flexibility and terms desired by Applicant
   5. E-rate ineligible costs: Any costs of the proposed service that are not eligible for E-rate funding. This does not refer to the post-discount portion of eligible costs that are the responsibility of the Applicant.
   6. Provider references: response included K12 references that were similar in size and scope.

**Section 7: Protest**

1. A bid protest must be received within fifteen (15) calendar day from the award notification date.
2. Protest letters must include reasons for the protest

**Appendix A**

**Sites**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **BEN** | **Site** | **Address** | **City** | **Zip Code** | **Current Band-width** | **Longitude - Latitude** |
| 29712 | Acme Delco Elementary School | 16337 Old Lake Road | Riegelwood | 28456 | 1 Gb | 34.347620, -78.254330 |
| 29677 | Cerro Gordo Elementary School | 7685 Andrew Jackson Highway | Cerro Gordo | 28430 | 1 Gb | 34.329155, -78.930449 |
| 29679 | Chadbourn Elementary School | 409 East 3rd Street | Chadbourn | 28431 | 1 Gb | 34.325306, -78.820833 |
| 29704 | East Columbus Junior-Senior High School | 32 Gator Lane | Lake Waccamaw | 28450 | 1 Gb | 34.336167, -78.501778 |
| 29687 | Evergreen Elementary School | 7211 Old 74 Highway | Evergreen | 28438 | 1 Gb | 34.407456, -78.898718 |
| 29693 | Hallsboro Elementary School | 1337 Giles Byrd Road | Hallsboro | 28442 | 1 Gb | 34.310971, -78.578803 |
| 29739 | Nakina Middle School | 9822 Seven Creeks Highway | Nakina | 28455 | 1 Gb | 34.108083, -78.654278 |
| 29746 | Old Dock Elementary School | 12489 New Brittan Highway East | Whiteville | 28472 | 1 Gb | 34.164500, -78.595389 |
| 29730 | South Columbus High School | 40 Stallion Drive | Tabor City | 28463 | 1 Gb | 34.173284, -78.814544 |
| 29726 | Tabor City Elementary School | 203 Stake Road | Tabor City | 28463 | 1 Gb | 34.151389, -78.874361 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 29727 | Tabor City Middle School | 701 West 6th Street | Tabor City | 28463 | 1 Gb | 34.148269, -78.886081 |
| 29678 | West Columbus High School | 7294 Andrew Jackson Highway SW | Cerro Gordo | 28430 | 1 Gb | 34.328550, -78.923981 |
| 29747 | Williams Township Elementary School | 10400 James B White Highway South | Whiteville | 28472 | 1 Gb | 34.204522, -78.763780 |
| 16024419 | Columbus County Dept of Transportation | 1231 Chadbourn Highway | Whiteville | 28472 | 1 Gb | 34.336278, -78.725278 |
| 16024418 | Columbus County Schools Technology Department | 5487 Silver Spoon Road | Whiteville | 28472 | 1 Gb | 34.424833, -78.797750 |
| Needs BEN | Columbus County Schools Plant Operations / Technology | 89 School Rd | Hallsboro | 28442 | 1 Gb | 34.320611, -78.593250 |
| Needs BEN | Columbus Career and College Academy | 685 Academy Street | Fair Bluff | 28439 | 1 Gb | 34.313833, -79.026111 |
| 17018034 | New Tabor City Lower School | Address not yet provided (see Latitude and Longitude); Adjacent to: Tabor City Elementary School | Tabor City | 28463 | 1 Gb | 34.151944, -78.873806 |
| 17018033 | New Cerro Gordo Lower School | Address not yet provided (see Latitude and Longitude); Adjacent to: Cerro Gordo Elementary School | Cerro Gordo | 28430 | 1 Gb | 34.329167, -78.932056 |
| 16030807 | Columbus County Schools Board Education Bldg | 817 Washington Street | Whiteville | 28472 | 10 Gb | 34.336667, -78.720194 |

**Appendix B**

**References**

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| **School District or Library System** | **Contact Name** | **Email Address** | **Telephone Number** |
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**Appendix C**

**Checklist**

* + 5-year with two 1-year extensions, 1 Gbps
  + Network design
  + Construction routes are included
  + Network design provides resiliency
  + Bandwidth is scalable
  + Pricing spreadsheet is attached
    - If needed, pricing includes NRC
    - Pricing includes MRC
    - Pricing includes all taxes and fees
    - Understand that costs added to the quote after the bid is submitted are the responsibility of the company and not the Applicant
  + The contract will allow for bandwidth upgrades via a contract amendment
  + Site additions or reductions will be addressed via a contract amendment
  + Disconnect fees
  + Downgrade fees
  + Agree to SLA
  + Proposal includes all site names and addresses
  + If notified of winning this bid, the contract will include all site names and addresses
  + Cut-over dates
  + Agrees to pay the cost to previous provider, if Wide Area Network is not ready for service by the start of the contract
  + Three references
  + It is understood that failure to provide all items requested in this RFP are grounds for disqualification
  + USAC 498 ID (SPIN)
  + Must have a SPAC Form on file for each funding year covered
  + Upon award of a contract, Bulk Upload Spreadsheets will be provided
  + An aggregate uptime of 99.9% uptime will be provided
  + Circuits will not be throttled
  + Protest deadlines are understood
  + By submitting a proposal, we are agreeing to the requirements of the RFP

**Appendix D**

**Pricing Sheet**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **BEN** | **Site** | **Premium Metro Ethernet Service** | **E-Rate Eligible**  **Monthly**  **Rate** | **E-Rate Ineligible Monthly**  **Rate** |  | **E-Rate Eligible**  **Nonrecurring**  **Charge** | **E-Rate Ineligible Nonrecurring**  **Charge** |
| 29712 | Acme Delco Elementary School | 1 Gb |  |  |  |  |  |
| 29677 | Cerro Gordo Elementary School | 1 Gb |  |  |  |  |  |
| 29679 | Chadbourn Elementary School | 1 Gb |  |  |  |  |  |
| 29704 | East Columbus Junior-Senior High School | 1 Gb |  |  |  |  |  |
| 29687 | Evergreen Elementary School | 1 Gb |  |  |  |  |  |
| 29693 | Hallsboro Elementary School | 1 Gb |  |  |  |  |  |
| 29739 | Nakina Middle School | 1 Gb |  |  |  |  |  |
| 29746 | Old Dock Elementary School | 1 Gb |  |  |  |  |  |
| 29730 | South Columbus High School | 1 Gb |  |  |  |  |  |
| 29726 | Tabor City Elementary School | 1 Gb |  |  |  |  |  |
| 29727 | Tabor City Middle School | 1 Gb |  |  |  |  |  |
| 29678 | West Columbus High School | 1 Gb |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 29747 | Williams Township Elementary School | 1 Gb |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 16024419 | Columbus County Dept of Transportation | 1 Gb |  |  |  |  |  |
| 16024418 | Columbus County Schools Technology Department | 1 Gb |  |  |  |  |  |
| Needs BEN | Columbus County Schools Plant Operations / Technology | 1 Gb |  |  |  |  |  |
| Needs BEN | Columbus Career and College Academy | 1 Gb |  |  |  |  |  |
| 17018034 | New Tabor City Lower School | 1 Gb |  |  |  |  |  |
| 17018033 | New Cerro Gordo Lower School | 1 Gb |  |  |  |  |  |
| 16030807 | Columbus County Schools Board Education Bldg | 10 Gb |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Sub-Total: |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Yearly |  |  |  |  |  |