

E-Rate – the Past, Present and Future

Schools and Libraries Universal Service Support



When did E-Rate start?

When the Telecommunications Act of 1996 was signed into law, for the first time schools and libraries became eligible for Universal Service support. An explicit goal of the Act is to ensure that schools and libraries have affordable access to advanced telecommunications. On May 7, 1997, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) issued a unanimous ruling for implementing Universal Service.

This fund is maintained through contributions made by telecommunications providers through fees included in communications services bills.*

***currently 16.1%**

What Is E-Rate?

❖ E-Rate is administered by Universal Service Administration Company (USAC) under the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) direction

❖ Schools work with the Schools and Libraries Division (SLD) of the USAC

❖ The SLD provides discounts to assist schools & libraries in obtaining telecommunications & Internet access

USAC
Universal Service Administrative Company

USAC administers the Universal Service Fund providing communities across America with affordable telecommunications services.

Helping Keep Americans Connected

About USAC

Fund Administration The fund is maintained through contributions made by telecommunications providers across the country and is disbursed based on four primary support programs.

High Cost	Rural Health Care	Low Income	Schools and Libraries
High Cost support ensures that consumers in all regions of the Nation have access to and pay rates for telecom services that are reasonably	Rural Health Care support provides reduced rates to rural health care providers for telecom and Internet services so they pay no more than their	Low Income support, commonly known as Lifeline and Link Up, provides discounts that make basic, local telephone service	Schools and Libraries support goes to service providers that provide discounts on eligible services to eligible schools, school districts, libraries, and



Dark Fiber

Dark fiber refers to unused fiber-optic cable. More strands of fiber are installed than initially needed. Allows scalability and predictable costs.

E-Rate recently (2014) added dark fiber to the list of allowed services. Dark fiber must be justified as cost effective when compared to lit services.

Initial bandwidth increases of 1,000 to 4,000 percent.

Projected ten year savings of \$575,000 while increasing bandwidth by up to 400,000 percent.

Challenges with E-Rate processes - building the car as it is going down the road.



Wireless Access

2016 Funding Year:

43 switches

292 Wireless Access Points

2017 Funding Year:

63 switches

111 Wireless Access Points



Internet2

Internet2 is a not-for-profit United States computer networking consortium led by members from the research and education communities, industry, and government. Developed to overcome the Internet's bandwidth limitations.

Provides an opportunity to increase Internet bandwidth to the district while lowering the cost of services.

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Questions

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