

Item 9-B



MEMORANDUM
Office of the Chief Information Officer

To: Dr. Ponce and the Board of Trustees

From: Caleb Hogue

Date: September 15, 2025

Re: Consideration for approving a purchase to DataDefense Partners for Network Security and Support Renewals through the Equalis Cooperative.

Staff Recommendation: Approval

The Board is asked to approve a purchase to DataDefense Partners for Network Security and Support Renewals through the Equalis Cooperative

Purchase Approval



Description: Consideration for approving a purchase to DataDefense Partners for Network Security and Support Renewals through the Equalis Cooperative.

Recommendation: The Board is asked to approve a purchase to DataDefense Partners for Network Security and Support Renewals through the Equalis Cooperative

This proposal outlines the need to renew our network and security services and support to ensure the continued protection of the College's digital infrastructure. As cyber threats continue to evolve in complexity and frequency, maintaining robust defenses is critical to safeguarding sensitive data, ensuring compliance, and supporting uninterrupted business operations.

Our current security solutions have been instrumental in preventing unauthorized access to our internal networks, monitoring and filtering inbound and outbound traffic, and enforcing our security posture in each area of our network infrastructure.

As our security posture has grown, we have purchased security products from Fortinet through DataDefense Partners. Many of these products are due for support renewals over the next three years, so this proposal is to consolidate the renewals to a single renewal date and provide an annual payment option that fits our budgetary needs.

This purchase includes the following renewals cotermed to September 30, 2028:

- 6 core network switches for Temple and Hutto
- 135 access network switches in Temple, Hutto, Taylor, and TBI locations
- FortiGuard Indicators of Compromise Service-Provides early warning detection of network and computer intrusion
- FortiVoice Telephone system with remote support
- FortiGate Firewalls for Hutto, Taylor, and THBD Locations with Unified Threat Protection and internet filtering
- FortiEDR Endpoint Detection and Response with Forensics and Threat Hunting
- FortiMail Email Filtering and Virus Outbreak Protection
- FortiAnalyzer Security Automation software

Justification for Renewal

- Continuity of Protection: Avoiding gaps in network security coverage
- Vendor Performance: Proven reliability, support, and threat detection capabilities
- Support: Maintaining the latest security updates with 24x7 support
- Compliance Requirements: Maintaining security standards such as TAC §202
- Scalability: Supporting future growth
- Cost Efficiency: Leveraging renewal discounts and avoiding onboarding costs for new vendors



DataDefense Partners was chosen due to their previous experience with the college, and through competitive pricing offered through the manufacturer.

The Board of Trustees is asked to approve a purchase to DataDefense Partners for \$84,282.93 per year for three years, totalling \$252,848.79. The contract is offered through the Equalis cooperative agreement, contract TC-COG-2127C. This cooperative meets the College's requirements for competitive solicitations found in Texas Education Code 44. The Board of Trustees is also asked to give authority to the Vice President of Administration to approve the contract and to approve any change orders up to the amount allowed by the Texas Education Code 44.0411.

Funds Available:

___X___ Budgeted

___ Fund Balance

___ Other:

Approved:

Christina Ponce
President

Date