

MEMO

To: JPS Board Of Education
From: Phil Rowley, Director of Information Technology
Christine Marcy, Director of Finance and Operations
Date: Tuesday Feb 3, 2026

Subject: Wi-Fi and Structured Cabling Bids (E RATE)

RATIONALE/OVERVIEW

The WiFi network at JPS comprises approximately 300 access points, across all indoor facilities and select outdoor spaces. The oldest of these access points were purchased between 2015 and 2016. As the ten year age mark approaches, our WiFi vendor will soon no longer provide support or software updates. Additionally, aging devices may eventually fail and require replacement. Lack of support means newer devices may not support the fastest or latest WiFi standards.

In December of 2025, we engaged our E RATE consultant and current WiFi vendor to develop a bid specification based on which devices will soon fall off support or are insufficient for our current needs.. In that process, we additionally discovered locations where the physical network wiring going to our access points is old enough to necessitate replacement. So, the total bid consisted of a ***structured cabling component*** and a ***network electronics component***.

Various vendors responded to this bid and the process was guided by our E RATE consultant, as it ensures we capture a 50% discount using Federal Universal Service Funding to offset costs of this large project.

After reviewing the bids and using a scoring rubric (attached), we determined Vector Tech Group to be the most suitable bid for this project. Vector has maintained and supported WiFi at JPS for over 20 years and we have been very pleased with the Ruckus WiFi solution they are proposing in this bid package. Additionally, Vector provided the lowest bid on the structured cabling component of this project.

PURCHASE PROPOSAL

The initial cost to JPS will be \$259,561.78 with 50% of that being reimbursed through E-RATE, resulting in a final cost for JPS of \$129,780.89. Of the approximately 300 access points, JPS is seeking to replace 245 units. Not all units are a one-to-one swap, for example some swaps will help provide additional needed coverage such as at the JCA and High School. The remaining 50+ units will remain sufficient to support our needs, with many of those installed during recent construction projects at Bursley, Sandy Hill and Wildcat Fieldhouse.

DEPLOYMENT PLANNING

If approved, JPS will order immediately and begin receipt of equipment. Installation will commence once school is out for summer and will continue into the summer months. It is anticipated that the new WiFi and wiring will be ready for the beginning of the 2026-2027 school year.

ASSET RECLAMATION AND DISPOSAL

As with all end-of-life technology assets, we will submit this equipment to qualified recycling vendors to ensure it is disposed of in a legal, ethical and environmentally conscious manner.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is the anticipated lifespan of these WiFi Access Points?
Ten years. This is a standard lifespan used across many K-12 districts.
2. Does this include WiFi needs at the new MTC facility?
No. When we opened Wildcat Fieldhouse, additional WiFi units were part of that purchase to accommodate future needs such as MTC.
3. If we are unable to obtain approval for this project, how will that affect future WiFi needs?
As WiFi units fail or require repair, we would seek to obtain compatible/comparable units from off-market sites or surplus sales. Newer devices may end up capped at slower speeds, since the device and WiFi access point won't be able to agree on the fastest standard available.
4. Why do we need to run new wire? Is the current cabling not sufficient?
Yes and no. While new WiFi units would be able to physically connect, it may not support the highest speeds available due to limitations in wiring standards. Also, physical cabling can have lifespan limitations and experience stress and damage over time due to other projects happening above ceiling spaces in buildings, resulting in a poor WiFi experience.
5. Will this purchase include WiFi for the new Upper Elementary building?
No. The future construction timeline of that project necessitates its own network equipment purchases under bond funds.
6. Will this WiFi project add any additional coverage in outdoor spaces?
Not at this time. Outdoor WiFi requires specialized equipment at a much greater cost. For example, the new Tennis Court building included outdoor WiFi. As needs in these spaces are made known, we aim to complete these projects separately, utilizing various design methods to keep that cost low. It is our goal to prioritize the primary and secondary learning spaces, while also keeping in mind future needs in our outdoor spaces.