TO: Dr. Carol Kelley, Superintendent of Schools

FROM: Michael Arensdorff, Senior Director of Technology

SUBJECT: E-rate

DATE: February 18, 2020

Names of presenters: Michael Arensdorff

Type of report: E-rate

Report format: Informational report, with Q&A at board table

Preview of purpose and content of report: Included below is an overview of the bid process, bid summary and recommendation for the E-rate proposal

Budgetary impact: Impact is $21,840.00 to the Technology Plan budget (switches) and $12,542 per month impact to annual operating budget (WAN). As this is part of our E-rate application in category 1 & 2, we are seeking a 40% reimbursement, which would bring the total expense to the district down to $13,104 for the switches and $7,525.20 for the WAN.

Data to be presented: February 18, 2020

Category 1 - (Wide Area Network):

As shared and approved by the board we are collaborating on a fiber WAN project that we expect will go live for District 97 prior to July 1, 2021. Prior to that District 97 needs to continue WAN services with another provider for a one year stopgap. For this it is recommended to move forward with the only bid that was provided for a one year option. We received multiple two, three and five year options for this solution, but only one proposal for a one year solution. This proposal came from our current provider, Comcast. We believe and confirmed from the other providers that the one year option from them would not make sense or be cost effective. The Comcast proposal was for $12,542 for 1 GB service to each building and 10 GB to our headend (data center). This is the same service/capacity we currently have in place. This is a $1,142 increase each month from our current expense. As this is part of our E-rate application in Category 1, we are seeking a 40 percent reimbursement for a total reimbursement of $60,201.60 for the year.

For this E-rate season, we have reviewed proposals from six vendors: AT&T, Comcast, Cytranet, Vero, WANRack and Zayo.

Category 2 -

Network Infrastructure Switch E-rate Proposal
As mentioned above, District 97 submitted a proposal via E-rate for switches and stacking modules. This went out to vendors on January 8, 2020, and we received all proposals in the allotted time window. We received and evaluated bids from the following vendors: CDWG, Netrix, SHI, Summit Information Resources and Total Communications. Similar to past E-rate awards, all proposals have been reviewed and evaluated individually by three staff members. The proposals are evaluated in the following ways, in order of highest weight: cost, completeness/quality of proposal, technical experience/recommendations, and familiarity with the district and service quality. Following this evaluation, our recommendation is to award the contract to Summit Information Resources, and purchase 7 switches and stacking modules, which are needed for the increase in end points and the power consumption needed for the newer technology (i.e. cameras, renovations, access points). Four of the switches will be used for the growth in endpoints throughout the district. Next, we will need three switches/stacking modules (one for each of the renovation locations - Hatch, Irving & Mann). As shared above the total cost will be $21,840. District 97 will seek reimbursement of $8,736 through the eRate program (40% discount rate, which is identified by our national free and reduced lunch numbers).

I want to note that through collaboration with Jim Hackett, our district Safety and Security Manager, we have put another request out (470 applications via eRate) for switches to support the Public Address systems for Brooks and Julian Middle School. For this project we anticipate bringing a recommendation to the board on March 17 with approval on April 7 for these switches. Please note that this project is tied to one of the alternates that were not accepted at the February 4th board meeting per the recommendation of Bulley and Andrews and our district team. This project has been adjusted and out for new proposals currently. It is anticipated to come to the board on March 17 along with these additional switches.

This work will be very beneficial in the future fiber project we expect to move forward on along with the Village of Oak Park.

I also want to emphasize that the switches and stacking module project will be part of the upcoming technology plan, school renovation project and PA project that will be presented. These dollars will not be in addition to, but included in, the overall technology plan recommendation developed by the Technology Advisory Committee and less than anticipated.

Equity: In order to provide students and staff of District 97 with valuable resources for learning, all items that are proposed in this memo are crucial. Our digital systems and tools and online instructional resources rely on Internet access, and our staff must also be able to efficiently and effectively access resources that are centered at

the district office through our Wide Area Network (WAN). If we did not have the WAN each building would operate as an island and overall costs would expand. This would also lead to potential inequalities throughout the district. Then to access these resources our students and staff need to have the switches throughout each building to ensure they can connect to the resources at any time and any place.

Communication with Key Stakeholders: Throughout the development of our most recent technology plan (approved in May 2018), the items included were reviewed and vetted by the Technology Advisory Committee, which included students, staff, parents and community members.

Evaluation and Ongoing Improvement: We are constantly evaluating and seeking to improve our access. We monitor traffic speeds and capacity of use on a daily basis. Based on the daily numbers we will be better informed if changes need to be made to maximize the speeds or overall capacity. We look at the number of days we have met 75 percent bandwidth capacity, measure ourselves against SEPTA standards, monitor helpdesk tickets in a variety of categories to determine areas of success and areas of improvement, and measure uptime.

Resource Requirements: Included above are the expenses that will go into this recommendation and the savings that the district will realize over the next one to three years. In regards to staffing, the WAN contracts will not require much time, as we are currently contracting with Comcast and they will just need to increase our bandwidth speeds. The switches/stacking modules will require approximately two weeks worth of work for two to three staff members to fully implement this project. This includes inventory, labeling, configuring, distributing, racking switching and removal/redistribution of switches.