

E-Rate Broadband RFP Evaluation Minutes

Date: Monday, March 18, 2024

Time: 4:07 PM

Location: ZOOM Video Communications

Attendees: Evaluation Committee:

Reginald Santos, Information Technology Director

David Vadiveloo, Superintendent

Bobby Bolen, Chief Operating Officer

Dennis Niedermeyer, Finance Director

Advisor:

Kela Hoffman, SERRC E-Rate Coordinator

Lauren Dobbs, SERRC E-Rate Assistant

Minutes:

Chelsie Overby, Board Secretary

The Schools and Libraries Universal Service program (E-Rate) requested service included pricing for one (1) year or three (3) years, with mutually agreed upon one-year extensions with a guaranteed service start date of July 1, 2024. The RFP included all pertinent requests and terms for a proposal minimum requiring 25Mbps plus additional incremental steps, up to the maximum 750Mbps. Services provided in Utqiagvik would be expected to be delivered to the NSBSD hub, Maintenance & Operations. Vendors were asked to submit their letter of intent to submit proposals by February 20, 2024 and questions regarding the RFP by February 23, 2024. Vendors were able to submit bids for the period beginning February 15, 2024 – March 14, 2024. To be considered, vendors must be registered with USAC and have a USAC-issued Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN). In addition, Bids determined to be non-responsive, incomplete, or not substantially meeting the essential requirements may be disqualified at the discretion of NSBSD.

Two vendors submitted proposals for the North Slope Borough School District E-Rate Broadband Request for Proposals (RFP). These two vendors are: General Communications Inc. (GCI) and MICROCOM Communications Solutions.

The Evaluation Committee discussed the requirements of the RFP and determined MICROCOM's bid was disqualified as the proposal was not responsive to the RFP's requirements. MICROCOM's bid did not bid on sites in Utqiagvik as required under Scope of Services and defined in Appendix A. MICROCOM's proposal did not include references from school districts as required under #6 of documentation required; and other technical requirements provided under General Information and Scope of Services such as provide fiber for locations that have fiber available, IP based wide-area-network, and co-location. Additionally, MICROCOM's proposed service was a limited metered priority internet service inconsistent with service levels required for unmetered and unrestricted internet.

As such, the only qualified bid received is through General Communications Inc.(GCI) with a fiber and LEO/GEO solution with a private one-to-one connection. The Evaluation Committee discussed the: cost for contract lengths of a one-year contract with the option of re-bidding or extensions up to ten (10) years versus the benefits of a 3-year duration contract with a 20% decrease in cost; megabyte services for various sites; and State Bandwidth Assistance Grant (BAG) application requirements.

In conclusion, it is the Evaluation Committee's recommendation to submit the award to General Communications Inc. (GCI) for E-Rate Broadband services. The Evaluation Committee requested the GCI Representative to attend the Special Meeting where this contract will be considered.

The Evaluation Committee meeting adjourned at 5:02 PM.

Prepared by:

Chelsie Overby
Board Secretary
NSBSD Board of Education