

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)
CATEGORY ONE – WIDE AREA NETWORK (WAN)
E-RATE FUNDING YEAR 2027

FCC FORM 470#: 270000581

APPLICANT NAME: SOUTH EUCLID-LYNDBURST SCHOOL DISTRICT
BILLED ENTITY NUMBER: 129495

INITIAL CONTRACT TERM: Sixty (60) months, July 1, 2027 – June 30, 2032, plus up to two (2) optional one-year renewal periods

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

The Applicant identified above hereby solicits competitive proposals from qualified Service Providers for the provision of E-Rate eligible Category One Wide Area Network (WAN) transport services pursuant to the Schools and Libraries Universal Service Support Mechanism (E-Rate Program) as administered by the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) under authority of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

This procurement is subject to all applicable federal, state, and local procurement laws, FCC regulations, USAC program requirements, and any Applicant-specific policies.

Service Providers responding to this solicitation are solely responsible for ensuring full compliance with all applicable E-Rate competitive bidding, pricing, equipment eligibility, invoicing, and record retention requirements.

RFP TIMELINE

- **RFP Issued:** 10/02/2026
- **Deadline for Submission of Questions:** 10/16/2026 by 3:00 p.m. Local Prevailing Time
- **Responses to Questions / Addenda Issued By:** 10/20/2026
- **Proposal Submission Deadline:** 11/18/2026 by 3:00 p.m. Local Prevailing Time

Mandatory Compliance Notice:

In accordance with FCC rules, the proposal submission deadline shall allow for no fewer than twenty-eight (28) full days from the posting date of the associated FCC Form 470 and/or RFP, whichever is later.

This RFP is issued in conjunction with, and is incorporated by reference into, the Applicant's FY2027 FCC Form 470, which will be posted in the E-Rate Productivity Center (EPC). The Applicant will not select a Service Provider, issue a notice of award, or execute a contract before the twenty-ninth (29th) calendar day following the later of the FCC Form 470 posting date or the date this RFP is issued.

RFP CONTACTS

All communications regarding this procurement must be directed exclusively to all designated contacts below:

- Peter Palazzo: palazzo@selschools.org
- Skylands E-Rate Operations Team: bids@e-rate.org

Proposals and all correspondence must be submitted by email to all designated contacts above using the subject line "SELSD FY2027 E-Rate WAN Transport RFP Response." The Applicant is not responsible for any technical difficulty encountered in the submission of a proposal. Proposals received after the stated deadline will be rejected.

COMMUNICATION AND PROCUREMENT INTEGRITY REQUIREMENTS

Authorized Communications:

- All questions, requests for clarification, and correspondence must be submitted in writing via email to all designated RFP contacts.
- Responses to material questions shall be issued through formal written addenda. If no questions are received as outlined in the RFP timeline, an addenda will not be posted for question-and-answer purposes.
- Verbal communications, informal discussions, and individual interpretations will not and shall not be binding.

Strict Prohibition on Unauthorized Contact:

Offerors are expressly prohibited from contacting any employee, representative, or agent of the Applicant not expressly authorized in this RFP. This includes, but is not limited to Board members, Superintendents/Directors, IT personnel not listed herein, Procurement staff not listed herein, Consultants other than designated contacts.

Violation of this restriction will result in immediate disqualification.

Duty to Monitor:

Offerors bear sole responsibility for monitoring the following on a regular basis:

- FCC Form 470 postings
- EPC updates
- Applicant communications
- Addenda
- Procurement portals, where applicable

Failure to monitor updates shall not relieve Offerors of compliance obligations.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Submission Instructions:

- Proposals **must** be submitted electronically to all listed RFP contacts.
- Late submissions shall be automatically disqualified.
- Applicant receipt timestamp shall control submission timeliness.
- Partial submissions may be rejected unless expressly permitted.
Offerors are solely responsible for ensuring timely and complete delivery of proposals, including mitigation of technical failures or transmission delays.

Mandatory Proposal Components:

Each proposal must include, at minimum:

- Applicant name
- BEN
- FCC Form 470 number
- Service Provider Name
- Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN)
- Service Provider contact information
- Terms and conditions
- Completed pricing worksheet

Each proposal is encouraged to include the following. Failure to provide the following may adversely affect the scoring of your proposal.

- SPI invoicing capability certification
- E-Rate compliance certifications (broad compliance with FCC rules, USAC procedures, LCP, Gift Rules, Record Retention, etc.)
- Supply chain compliance certification (ensures compliance with FCC Order 19-121)
- Debarment/suspension certification (confirms vendor is not FCC barred, Federal debarred, SAM excluded, etc.)
- FCC Red Light Rule Compliance Certification. Offerors should certify that they are not currently subject to the FCC's Red Light Rule (47 C.F.R. § 1.1910), are in good standing with all FCC financial obligations, and are not delinquent on any debts owed to the FCC.
- Conflict of interest disclosure (vendor disclosure statement that ensures no unfair bidding advantage or relationships have improperly influenced the procurement process, proposal development, or bid submission).
 - Failure to fully disclose relevant conflicts may result in disqualification, contract termination, or referral to appropriate regulatory authorities.

Proposal Validity:

Proposals must remain valid, and all quoted prices guaranteed, for a minimum of one hundred eighty (180) days from the proposal submission deadline. A proposal may not be withdrawn during that period.

Proposal Exceptions / Deviations:

By submitting a proposal, the Offeror acknowledges that it has reviewed and agrees to comply with the terms, conditions, and requirements set forth in this RFP unless specific exceptions are clearly identified in the proposal submission.

Any proposed exceptions, deviations, or alternative terms must be explicitly disclosed in writing as part of the proposal response.

The Applicant reserves the sole right to determine the acceptability of any exceptions, may require withdrawal of unacceptable exceptions, and may consider exceptions or deviations in proposal evaluation and scoring.

Failure to clearly disclose exceptions may result in proposal disqualification or rejection.

PRE-BID MEETING / SITE VISIT

No pre-bid conference will be held, and the Applicant will not conduct individual site visits during the competitive bidding period. Offerors requiring additional site, demarcation, conduit, or entrance facility information must submit written questions to all RFP contacts by the question deadline stated in the RFP Timeline. Responses will be issued to all Offerors by written addendum so that no Offeror receives information that is not made available to every other Offeror.

SCOPE OF WORK: WIDE AREA NETWORK (WAN) SERVICES

The Applicant is seeking competitive proposals from qualified Service Providers to furnish E-Rate eligible Category One Wide Area Network (WAN) transport services connecting the Applicant's designated hub site and Network Operations Center (the "A" Location) to each remote location identified in the Service Locations section of this Request for Proposals (RFP).

The Applicant will consider proposals for Wide Area Network (WAN) connectivity services delivered over provider-furnished facilities, including, but not limited to, leased lit fiber services, as well as proposals for leased dark fiber that the Applicant will light with its own existing network equipment. Proposals may include the provision, operation, maintenance, and support of the underlying facilities, as further described in the Service Options section below. Network equipment (modulating electronics) is not solicited under this RFP.

The Applicant seeks solutions that meet the performance, availability, scalability, service management, and other requirements specified in this RFP, regardless of the technology, architecture, or service delivery method used to provide the proposed solution.

Internet access is not solicited under this RFP. The Applicant procures Internet access separately and it is outside the scope of this RFP.

The proposed solution shall provide reliable, high-capacity, symmetrical, transparent Layer 2 Ethernet transport capable of supporting the Applicant's instructional, administrative, voice, video, cloud-based, and other mission-critical network applications. All routing is performed by the Applicant on its own equipment. For a leased lit fiber solution, the successful Offeror shall furnish all labor, materials, facilities, provider demarcation equipment, software, licensing, project management, testing, installation, monitoring, maintenance, and support necessary to deliver a fully operational transport service to the demarcation point at each location. Where a leased dark fiber solution is proposed, the Applicant's requirements for capacity, availability, and performance apply to the fiber as lit by the Applicant's existing network equipment.

The Applicant's Internet Access demarcation ("Hub Site") and Network Operations Center, "A" Location, is located at:

- **Brush High School, 4875 Glenlyn Road, Cleveland, Ohio 44124 (E-Rate Entity Number 47973)**

The proposed WAN shall provide transport services between the Hub Site and every location identified in the Service Locations section of this RFP.

Current Network Environment

The Applicant's existing WAN is a hub-and-spoke network. Brush High School is the hub, and each remote location connects directly back to Brush High School over its own fiber path. Six (6) strands (three (3) pair) of single-mode fiber are currently in place to each building. The Applicant uses four (4) of those strands (two (2) pair) to run dual 10 Gbps links to every building.

The Applicant lights its fiber with its own equipment: dual Aruba CX-8320 switches at the core (Brush High School) and Aruba CX-6200M switches at every other location. The Applicant will continue to use this existing equipment and is not seeking network equipment under this RFP. Any leased lit fiber service must hand off to, and any leased dark fiber must be compatible with, this equipment.

Offerors must submit proposals covering all locations identified herein. Partial proposals will be considered non-responsive and will not be evaluated. A proposal that covers every location but fewer than all three Service Options is not a partial

proposal for this purpose; Offerors may elect which Service Options to propose, as provided in the Service Options section below.

The Applicant requires transport services between the "A" Location and each of the sites listed below.

SERVICE OPTIONS

Offerors may propose one, several, or all of the service options below. Each option must be priced separately on Attachment 4 – Pricing Worksheet. For each option an Offeror elects to propose, the proposal must cover every E-Rate eligible location listed in this RFP; a proposal covering fewer than all eligible locations for a given option will be considered non-responsive as to that option.

- Service Option 1 – Leased Lit Fiber. A fully managed leased lit fiber, carrier Ethernet, or metro Ethernet solution providing dedicated, symmetrical Layer 2 Ethernet transport between the “A” Location and each “Z” Location, with each circuit delivered as a discrete handoff at the “A” Location.
- Service Option 2 – Leased Dark Fiber. A leased dark fiber solution, or an indefeasible right of use (IRU), providing a minimum of six (6) strands (three (3) pair) of single mode fiber between the “A” Location and each “Z” Location, with fiber maintenance included in the monthly recurring charge unless separately priced under Service Option 3. The Applicant will light the fiber with its own existing network equipment.
- Service Option 3 – Maintenance and Operations on Leased Dark Fiber. Maintenance and operations costs associated with leased dark fiber, to be priced only if those costs are not already included in the Service Option 2 charge.

In accordance with the FCC’s Second E-Rate Modernization Order, an applicant that seeks bids for leased dark fiber must also seek bids for the needed connectivity over leased lit fiber for a comparable time period. Accordingly, leased lit fiber and leased dark fiber are both solicited under a single FCC Form 470 and under this single RFP. The Applicant will light any leased dark fiber with its own existing network equipment and is not seeking E-Rate support for modulating electronics; network equipment is therefore not solicited. The Applicant will fully consider every responsive proposal and will select the most cost-effective solution, with the price of E-Rate eligible services as the single highest weighted factor.

The leased lit fiber solution and the leased dark fiber solution are mutually exclusive alternatives. The Applicant will evaluate each complete solution on its total cost of ownership over the sixty (60) month initial term.

An Offeror may propose an alternative or modified scope, but only as a supplement to a fully conforming proposal for at least one service option above. A submission consisting solely of an alternative scope will be considered non-responsive.

SERVICE LOCATIONS

Site Name	Entity Number	Physical Address	Network Role	E-Rate Eligibility	Required Bandwidth
Brush High School	47973	4875 Glenlyn Rd, Cleveland, OH 44124	Hub Site / NOC ("A" Location)	E-Rate Eligible	10 Gbps per "Z" Location circuit, each delivered as a discrete handoff at the Hub Site
South Euclid-Lyndhurst District Office	17033223	5044 Mayfield Rd, Lyndhurst, OH 44124	Remote Site ("Z" Location)	E-Rate Eligible (NIF)	10 Gbps
Adrian Elementary School	47941	1071 Homestead Rd, Cleveland, OH 44121	Remote Site ("Z" Location)	E-Rate Eligible	10 Gbps
Memorial Junior High School	47972	1250 Professor Rd, Cleveland, OH 44124	Remote Site ("Z" Location)	E-Rate Eligible	10 Gbps
Sunview Elementary School	47979	5520 Meadow Wood Blvd, Cleveland, OH 44124	Remote Site ("Z" Location)	E-Rate Eligible	10 Gbps
Rowland Elementary School	47939	4300 Bayard Rd, Cleveland, OH 44121	Remote Site ("Z" Location)	E-Rate Eligible	10 Gbps
Greenview Upper Elementary School	47945	1825 S Green Rd, Cleveland, OH 44121	Remote Site ("Z" Location)	E-Rate Eligible	10 Gbps
Southlyn	N/A	1340 Professor Road, Cleveland, OH 44124	Remote Site ("Z" Location)	NOT E-RATE ELIGIBLE	10 Gbps

E-RATE INELIGIBLE LOCATION – SOUTHLYN

Southlyn is not an E-Rate eligible entity, as it serves a pre-k population only at this time. Southlyn must nonetheless be connected to the Applicant's wide area network and must be included in every proposal. All costs attributable to Southlyn — including recurring transport, non-recurring charges, special construction, and maintenance — must be quoted separately in Section D of Attachment 4 and must be excluded from every E-Rate eligible cost total.

The Applicant will pay one hundred percent (100%) of all Southlyn costs from local funds and will not seek E-Rate support for them. Offerors must not average, blend, prorate, or otherwise distribute any portion of the Southlyn cost across the eligible locations. Any proposal that fails to isolate the Southlyn cost on a separate line may be rejected as non-responsive. In the event that Southlyn becomes an eligible entity at any time during the resulting contract period, it may then, and only then, be included on an FCC Form 471 for the funding year in which it becomes eligible, subject to any contract amendment or USAC-approved service substitution required by program rules.

Where a shared facility, fiber cable, electronics chassis, port, or circuit would serve both eligible locations and Southlyn, the Offeror must cost-allocate the shared cost using a documented and defensible methodology, describe that methodology in its proposal, and remove the ineligible portion from all eligible totals in accordance with 47 C.F.R. § 54.504 and USAC cost-allocation guidance.

Bandwidth Requirements

The Applicant requires a minimum committed, dedicated, symmetrical bandwidth of 10 Gbps for each WAN connection.

Offerors shall provide pricing for the required base bandwidth of 10 Gbps, symmetrical, at each service location, as set out on Attachment 4 – Pricing Worksheet. All proposed solutions shall be scalable to 10 Gbps, 20 Gbps, 40 Gbps, and 100 Gbps. Offerors shall state whether scaling to a higher bandwidth requires only a change of optics or transceivers, or the replacement of a line card or chassis. Offerors are also encouraged to provide pricing in their proposal for additional bandwidth requested that is not directly on the pricing worksheet.

For a leased dark fiber solution, the fiber must support the Applicant's existing 10 Gbps single-mode optics, and future upgrades to the bandwidths listed above, on every route. Offerors shall state the route distance and expected end-to-end optical loss from the Hub Site to each location.

Contract Terms

All pricing submitted in response to this RFP shall be based on the following contract term:

- **Sixty (60) months – five (5) years: July 1, 2027 through June 30, 2032. This is the required initial contract term for all pricing under every service option.**

In addition to the sixty (60) month initial term, all proposals shall include pricing and provisions for up to two (2) optional one-year renewal periods (1+1), exercisable solely at the Applicant's discretion and subject to mutual written agreement between the Applicant and the selected Service Provider. The maximum total duration of any resulting contract, including both renewal periods, shall not exceed eighty-four (84) months and shall end no later than June 30, 2034. Renewal period pricing shall not exceed the monthly recurring rate in effect during the final year of the initial term and must be quoted in Section E of Attachment 4.

Offerors shall clearly identify all Monthly Recurring Charges (MRC), Non-Recurring Charges (NRC), and any Special Construction Charges associated with each proposed contract term.

Pricing shall remain firm throughout the initial contract term and any exercised renewal period(s), except as otherwise expressly permitted by the resulting agreement.

The Applicant reserves the exclusive right to determine which service option, or combination of service options and locations, provides the best overall value and the most cost-effective solution consistent with the Applicant's operational needs and applicable FCC and USAC E-Rate program requirements.

At a minimum, the proposed WAN solution shall include:

- Dedicated Layer 2 Ethernet transport between the Hub Site and each remote site.
- Symmetrical committed bandwidth.
- A 10 Gbps single-mode fiber (SFP+) Ethernet handoff at each end of each circuit, compatible with the Applicant's Aruba CX-8320 switches at the Hub Site and Aruba CX-6200M switches at each remote site.
- Fully managed transport service, including proactive monitoring, fault detection, and network management by the Service Provider.
- Installation, configuration, testing, acceptance testing, and activation of all services required to place the network into production.
- Twenty-four (24) hours per day, seven (7) days per week monitoring through the Service Provider's Network Operations Center (NOC).
- Fault isolation, trouble ticket management, escalation procedures, and restoration services.
- Compliance with all applicable FCC, USAC, and E-Rate program requirements.

For a leased lit fiber solution, all provider equipment necessary to deliver the requested transport service to the demarcation point shall be included by the Service Provider. The Applicant will furnish its own switching equipment on the customer side of the demarcation point and, for a leased dark fiber solution, the equipment used to light the fiber.

Acceptable Transport Technologies

The Applicant will consider proposals utilizing:

- Leased Lit Fiber
- Leased dark fiber or IRU, lit by the Applicant's existing network equipment
- Carrier Ethernet
- Metro Ethernet
- Ethernet services provided over third-party fiber infrastructure
- Other fully managed transport solutions that satisfy all technical requirements contained in this RFP

Offerors may utilize facilities owned by the Service Provider, leased facilities, or third-party carrier infrastructure.

All proposed solutions shall provide equivalent or superior reliability, scalability, availability, and network performance.

Offerors proposing solutions utilizing third-party facilities shall remain solely responsible for contract performance, service delivery, maintenance, and compliance with all requirements contained herein.

Network Performance Requirements

The proposed WAN shall:

- Deliver dedicated symmetrical bandwidth between the Hub Site and each remote location.
- Provide transparent Layer 2 Ethernet transport.
- Support the Applicant's existing hub-and-spoke network architecture and Aruba CX-8320 / CX-6200M switching equipment without requiring unnecessary modification.
- Support bandwidth upgrades during the contract term where commercially available.
- Minimize latency, jitter, and packet loss.
- Be engineered to support real-time voice, video conferencing, cloud services, and instructional applications.
- Include commercially reasonable resiliency within the provider's network infrastructure.

Managed Services

The Service Provider shall provide comprehensive management of the proposed WAN, including:

- Continuous network monitoring.
- Fault detection and notification.
- Incident management and escalation.
- Circuit maintenance.
- Coordination with third-party carriers, where applicable.
- Customer technical support available twenty-four (24) hours per day, seven (7) days per week.
- Access to an online customer portal, if available, for service monitoring, ticket management, and outage reporting.

Scalability

The proposed WAN solution shall be scalable throughout the contract term.

The resulting contract shall permit:

- Bandwidth upgrades up to the maximum commercially available capacity at each location.
- Addition of new eligible Applicant locations under the same pricing methodology, where technically feasible.
- Removal of permanently closed locations without early termination penalties.
- Relocation of service when operationally necessary.

Bandwidth modifications shall be treated as amendments to the existing agreement and shall not constitute a new contract or extend the contract term.

Special Construction

If special construction is required, Offerors shall separately identify:

- Special Construction Charges.
- Monthly Recurring Charges (MRC).
- Non-Recurring Charges (NRC).
- Eligible and ineligible E-Rate cost allocations.
- Construction schedule.
- Description of proposed facilities.
- Ownership of constructed facilities upon completion.
- Any Applicant responsibilities associated with construction.

Failure to separately identify Special Construction costs may adversely affect proposal evaluation.

Special Construction – E-Rate Treatment

In E-Rate terminology, special construction refers to the upfront, non-recurring costs associated with the installation of new fiber to or between eligible entities. Special construction charges eligible for Category One support consist of three components: (i) construction of network facilities; (ii) design and engineering; and (iii) project management.

If no new fiber is installed, installation costs are standard non-recurring charges (NRC) rather than special construction. For a leased lit fiber solution requiring special construction, the costs of building the fiber are special construction and the costs of the equipment required to activate the service are a standard NRC. For a leased dark fiber solution, the Applicant will light the fiber with its own existing equipment, and no equipment is to be quoted.

The Applicant may receive special construction support for leased dark fiber only if that fiber is lit in the same funding year, and will not receive support for recurring dark fiber charges until the fiber is lit. Any Offeror proposing special construction must demonstrate that all sites will be constructed, lit, and placed in service on or before June 30, 2028.

No Installment Payment Plans

The Applicant does not request, and will not accept, an installment payment plan for its non-discount share of special construction charges or of any other one-time charge. All special construction and non-recurring charges shall be quoted, and will be invoiced, as one-time charges. Offerors shall not include installment, financing, or interest terms in their proposals.

Excess Fiber Strands

To the extent the winning Service Provider installs additional strands of fiber for its own future business use, the Service Provider assumes full responsibility for ensuring that those incremental costs are allocated out of the special construction charges billed to the Applicant, in accordance with FCC rules and orders.

If, after issuance of the Funding Commitment Decision Letter (FCDL), USAC or the FCC determines that the Service Provider did not cost-allocate the charges associated with the additional strands, the Applicant will not be responsible for reimbursing the Service Provider, and the Service Provider will assume all responsibility for the amounts deemed ineligible by USAC.

Early Installation of Category One Infrastructure

Category One infrastructure costs incurred before July 1, 2027 are eligible for support only if all of the following conditions are met:

- Initiation of installation does not take place before selection of the Service Provider pursuant to the posted FCC Form 470, and in no event earlier than January 1, 2027 (six months prior to the start of the funding year).
- The Category One service depends on the installation of the infrastructure.
- The underlying Category One service has a service start date on or after July 1, 2027.
- No invoice is submitted to USAC for reimbursement before July 1, 2027.

An Offeror that begins special construction before the Applicant receives an FCDL approving the special construction funding request does so at the mutual risk of the parties that the request may be denied or reduced; the allocation of that risk shall be set out in the resulting agreement.

Network Design and Construction Routes

The Applicant's network is a hub-and-spoke design, with Brush High School as the hub and a dedicated path from Brush High School to each remote location, and proposals must follow that design. Ring or alternative topologies are not requested. Offerors are encouraged to propose dedicated infrastructure with no other aggregation or third-party equipment on the fiber strands between sites and, for a leased lit fiber solution, with provider equipment at each site dedicated to the Applicant.

Where dedicated infrastructure is not possible, the use of shared infrastructure should be minimized and must be clearly identified. Subject to the hub-and-spoke design and the termination locations identified in this RFP, the Applicant leaves the construction route to the Offeror.

Network Documentation

Offerors are encouraged to provide the following with their proposals:

- Logical network topology diagram.
- Description of transport architecture.

- Identification of any third-party carrier facilities.
- Project implementation schedule.
- Installation methodology.
- Customer acceptance testing procedures.

SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT AND AVAILABILITY

The Service Provider shall guarantee network availability of 99.9% for each circuit in a given month, excluding scheduled maintenance. Scheduled maintenance is downtime for which the Service Provider provides the Applicant no fewer than seven (7) business days advance written notice. In the event of unscheduled downtime, the Applicant and the Service Provider will jointly determine the cause. If unscheduled downtime exceeds 0.1% in a given month, the Service Provider shall issue the service credits committed in its proposal, calculated in accordance with the service level commitments set forth below.

All proposed solutions shall meet or exceed the following service level commitments:

- 99.9% network availability of each circuit. Where leased dark fiber is proposed, this commitment applies to the continuity of the leased strands and is measured against the dark fiber response and repair commitments stated below.
- Frame and packet loss commitment of no more than 0.25%.
- Network latency commitment of no more than 3 ms.
- Network jitter commitment of no more than 1 ms.
- No right of the Service Provider to limit or throttle the capacity of any circuit at any time for any reason.
- Response to any outage within two (2) hours and restoration of service within four (4) hours. For leased dark fiber, response within two (2) hours and thereafter correction of the malfunction with reasonable diligence.
- A Network Operations Center providing problem tracking, resolution, and escalation support on a 24x7x365 basis, with escalation contacts furnished when the implementation schedule is completed.
- Prompt notification to designated Applicant contacts by email of all outage events, stating the nature of the problem, the actions taken, and the measures implemented to avoid similar outages.
- An incident report made available to the Applicant within five (5) working days of resolution, upon request.
- Measurement of outage duration beginning at the time the Applicant contacts the Service Provider and identifies the problem, with credits identified for outages of a stated duration or longer.
- Aggregate historical uptime statistics for the proposed service in the geographic area encompassing the Applicant.

Offerors shall describe their commitments and the compensation payable for non-performance, and shall provide a detailed trouble reporting, escalation, and resolution plan.

Dark Fiber Maintenance Practices

Where leased dark fiber is proposed, maintenance shall be provided seven (7) days per week, twenty-four (24) hours per day. If maintenance is subcontracted to a third party, the Offeror must hold and manage the subcontract and remains solely responsible for the service level agreement. Only the portion of maintenance required to support the Applicant's fiber segments may be charged; overall network maintenance may not be charged to the Applicant. Offerors shall include an overview of maintenance practices addressing:

- Routine maintenance and inspection.
- Scheduled maintenance windows and scheduling practices for planned outages.
- Marker and handhole inspection and repair.
- Handling of unscheduled outages and customer problem reports.
- The service level agreement included and any alternative service levels available at additional cost.
- Agreements in place with applicable utilities and utility contractors for emergency restoration.
- Repair of fiber breaks and mean time to repair.
- Replacement of damaged fiber and of fiber that no longer meets specifications.
- Post-repair testing.
- Policies for customer notification regarding maintenance.
- The process for changing procedures, including customer notification practices.
- The process for moves, adds, and changes.
- The process for responding to locate requests.

SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS AND CUSTOMER SERVICE

- It is preferred that the Service Provider shall have an existing support presence in the Cleveland, Ohio area.
- The Service Provider shall provide 24x7x365 Network Operations Center contact information for problem resolution.
- Offerors shall provide the contact information and background of the technical support team assigned to the Applicant.
- Offerors shall describe trouble ticket procedures and escalation intervals.
- Offerors shall describe the billing dispute resolution process.
- Offerors shall describe any web-based interface available for billing, trouble reporting, and service monitoring.

CUSTOMER PREMISE EQUIPMENT, DEMARCATION, AND SERVICE DOCUMENTATION

- For a leased lit fiber solution, the Applicant will allow Offerors to include provider-managed customer premise (demarcation) equipment as part of the service provided. All such equipment must include dual power supplies and must hand off to the Applicant's existing Aruba switches as described in this RFP. The Applicant will not purchase or lease network equipment under this RFP.

- All solutions must terminate service or infrastructure at the demarcation point at each address identified in this RFP and in Attachment 4. Solutions that bring service to the property line but not to the demarcation point are not acceptable.
- Offerors must specify the demarcation configuration included in base fees (for example, wall-mounted CPE with a CAT6a handoff, or a rack-mounted patch panel).
- For each distinct service proposal, Offerors must supply a copy of, or a link to, any applicable documentation detailing the Offeror's requirements for customer readiness, including requirements for space, power, and HVAC for customer premise equipment, customer-provided conduit, and any similar "room ready" requirements.
- The Service Provider must submit a service layout record (also known as a design layout record) within thirty (30) days of turn-up, which must include fiber distances between end locations and major intermediate sites.

ADOPTION OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES, UPGRADES, AND RELOCATIONS

Adoption of New Technologies

The Applicant reserves the right to substitute, without financial penalty, the functional equivalent of existing services as new technologies emerge. Offerors should address how new technologies and services will be handled within the terms of the contract during the life of the agreement. While the Applicant is willing to enter into a multi-year agreement, it is the Applicant's expectation that such an agreement will permit the adoption of new technologies without penalty during the life of the agreement. Any change to E-Rate supported products or services requires the prior written approval of the Applicant and, where required, a USAC service substitution approval.

Upgrades

Following installation of any awarded service, and during the term of that service including any renewal period, the Service Provider agrees that the Applicant shall have the right to upgrade an existing service to a higher bandwidth without incurring termination liability and without modifying the term of the initial contract. If the Applicant elects to upgrade, the Service Provider shall have the first option to provide that service at a price that reflects, in the Applicant's sole discretion, a fair market price. If the Service Provider is unable to provide the upgrade, or is able to do so only at a price the Applicant does not consider a fair market price, the Applicant reserves the right to cancel the existing service and to solicit proposals from other service providers, and will not be subject to any early termination liability. The Applicant will provide the Service Provider with evidence of the change. Bandwidth upgrades shall be treated as amendments to the existing agreement, shall not constitute a new contract, and shall not extend the contract term.

Relocations

Following award, and during the term of the service including any renewal period, the Service Provider agrees that the Applicant shall have the right to relocate an existing service to a different "A" or "Z" location without incurring early termination liability and

without modifying the term of the initial contract. The Service Provider shall have the first option to provide the relocated service at a fair market price. If the Service Provider is unable to do so, the Applicant reserves the right to cancel the existing service and to solicit proposals from other service providers, and will provide the Service Provider with evidence of the change.

Optional Services

Offerors may propose optional services not specifically requested by the Applicant. The Applicant shall be under no obligation to consider or adopt any such services. All optional services must be priced separately and each line must be identified as E-Rate eligible or ineligible.

PROPOSAL CONTENT

Failure to include any information identified below as required may be grounds for disqualification. Each proposal shall include:

- A description of the proposal for each service option proposed, including an overview of the solution, any deviations from the requested architecture, design, or requirements, all assumptions made, and any other detail that differentiates the solution from a competing proposal.
- A timeline for bringing all sites online. Proposals requiring little or no special construction must bring all sites online by the July 1, 2027 start of the funding year. Proposals requiring special construction must include a schedule for bringing sites online together with an explanation of how that timeline shifts if the date of the E-Rate funding commitment shifts.
- The specific demarcation configuration proposed at each location.
- A network diagram displaying the paths used to serve each endpoint, showing whether circuits are routed through any aggregation hubs, equipment, or third-party facilities between the hub site and each endpoint.
- Three (3) references from current or recent customers, preferably K-12 school districts, with projects of a size and scope equivalent to that of the Applicant. If an Offeror responds to more than one service option, three (3) references must be provided for each option.
- A list of the K-12 school districts and community college districts for which the Offeror has provided the same or similar services in the past five (5) years, limited to the ten (10) most recent, including the district name, a description of the services provided, a contact name and telephone number, and the Offeror personnel who performed the services.
- A statement of any recent, current, or anticipated contractual obligation relating to similar work that may conflict with the Offeror providing services to the Applicant.
- A completed Pricing Worksheet, submitted in native Microsoft Excel (.xlsx) format.
- A detailed breakdown of installation costs, special construction costs, professional fees, and all other costs, fees, expenses, or charges, with each item identified as E-Rate eligible or ineligible.

E-RATE PROGRAM INTEGRITY ASSURANCE (PIA) REVIEW

- If its solution is selected, the Offeror is required to promptly provide the Applicant with any information requested as part of PIA review, and to reply within three (3) business days to any question associated with its proposal arising in a pre-commitment review, post-commitment review, or audit inquiry.
- Service Providers may assist the Applicant with preparing funding requests or responding to PIA questions and may speak directly with PIA reviewers.
- For all proposals that include special construction, the Offeror agrees, by submitting its proposal, to produce all construction labor, construction materials, and other cost information requested during PIA review.
- All proposals must agree in writing to this section with a "yes" or "no" answer. Answering "no," or failing to answer at all, may be grounds for disqualification.

NOTICE TO PROCEED AND FUNDING AVAILABILITY

- The Applicant will follow the purchasing policies of the South Euclid-Lyndhurst Board of Education and the requirements and procedures of the FCC's E-Rate program as administered by the Universal Service Administrative Company in order to remain eligible for all available funding.
- The implementation of any contract resulting from this competitive process is dependent on the Applicant's issuance of a written Notice to Proceed.
- E-Rate funding notification alone will not constitute a Notice to Proceed. The Applicant reserves the right to allow the contract to expire without implementation if appropriate funding, including any state matching funds for special construction, does not become available.
- This project may be contingent on the level of approved funding from the Universal Service Fund's Schools and Libraries Program. The Applicant, in its sole discretion, may or may not proceed with the project, in whole or in part, with or without E-Rate approval.

PRICING REQUIREMENTS

All proposals must include:

- Itemized unit pricing
- Extended totals
- Separate eligible/ineligible cost allocation
- MRC (Monthly Recurring Charges)
- NRC (Non-Recurring Charges)
- Special Construction Charges (SPC)
- Installation labor
- Configuration costs
- Taxes and fees

Pricing Integrity:

- Pricing must remain firm for full contract duration.
- No unilateral price escalations permitted.
- Promotional pricing exceeding 90 days must be reflected where applicable.
- Pricing must comply with Lowest Corresponding Price rules.
- Installment payment plans and financing of any one-time charge, including special construction, are not permitted.

Tariffs / Import Costs:

If tariff exposure exists, Offeror must clearly disclose:

- Affected products
- Proposed adjustment methodology
- Contractual limitations

Applicant retains sole discretion over acceptance.

CONTRACT CONDITIONS

- Applicant intends to enter into a legally binding written agreement.
- Annual appropriation/non-appropriation provisions may apply.
- Written amendments are mandatory for all changes.
- FCC service delivery deadline extensions may be incorporated where applicable.
- Applicant is not obligated to purchase full quoted quantities.
- Contract award may be whole or partial.

All pricing submitted in response to this RFP shall be based on a sixty (60) month initial contract term running from July 1, 2027 through June 30, 2032. All contracts must include an option for up to two (2) additional one-year renewal periods (structured as 1+1), exercisable solely at the Applicant's discretion and subject to mutual written agreement by both parties, with a maximum total contract duration of eighty-four (84) months ending no later than June 30, 2034.

Pricing for special construction, Non-Recurring Charges (NRC), and Monthly Recurring Charges (MRC) must remain fixed for the entire contract term. Service providers offering equipment subject to potential price increases due to new U.S. government tariffs on imports are encouraged to (a) clearly identify such equipment in their proposals, and (b) propose a suitable methodology to limit price adjustments over the contract lifecycle. Within the constraints of the contract, service cost-effectiveness may be reviewed at any time during the agreement, including renewal periods.

All contracts must include a clause allowing the Applicant to terminate circuits early, without penalty, if a location is closed. Furthermore, if the Applicant opens a new location, the contract must allow for that site to be added at the existing MRC rate for the remainder of the contract term, with the Applicant responsible for any associated one-time charges to

incorporate the new site into the network. Any addition, removal, upgrade, or relocation of an E-Rate supported service requires the prior written approval of the Applicant and, where required by program rules, a USAC service substitution approval.

Contracts shall permit bandwidth increases up to the maximum commercially available bandwidth offered by the selected Service Provider at the service location. Such bandwidth adjustments, including during any renewal periods, shall be treated as amendments to the existing agreement rather than new agreements, and will not extend the contract term.

BEST AND FINAL OFFER (BAFO)

The Applicant reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to request Best and Final Offers (BAFO) from all responsive and responsible Offerors.

If BAFO is utilized:

- All eligible Offerors shall receive equal notice
- Uniform submission requirements shall apply
- Identical deadlines shall be enforced
- BAFO requests shall preserve full FCC competitive bidding compliance

Nothing herein obligates Applicant to request BAFO.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

In full compliance with FCC requirements, the cost of E-Rate eligible products and services shall be the single highest weighted evaluation factor.

Leased Lit Fiber, Leased Dark Fiber, or Services Provided Over Third-Party Networks, Maintenance and Operations

Weight	Evaluation Criterion	Explanation
35%	Price of E-Rate eligible products and services	The total cost of ownership of the eligible components of the proposed solution over the 60-month initial term, including all recurring and one-time costs. This refers to the pre-discount cost of the solution, not the post-discount share payable by the Applicant. Per 47 C.F.R. § 54.511(a), this criterion carries the single highest weight.
20%	Ability to meet the technical, bandwidth, and service level requirements of this RFP	The proposed solution demonstrably meets every requirement in the Scope of Work, Network Performance Requirements, and Service Level Agreement sections.
10%	Price of E-Rate ineligible products and services	Any cost of the proposed solution that is not eligible for E-Rate support, including all Southlyn costs. This does not refer to the post-discount share of eligible costs.
10%	Service reliability and dedicated infrastructure	The extent to which the solution provides dedicated infrastructure, without shared equipment or routing of Applicant traffic through aggregation hubs or third-party facilities.

10%	Proposed contract terms and conditions	The proposed agreement provides the flexibility and terms sought by the Applicant, including renewal, upgrade, relocation, and termination provisions, and takes no material exception to this RFP.
10%	Provider references and prior K-12 experience	References from current or recent customers, preferably K-12 districts of comparable size and scope, together with documented prior experience.
5%	Implementation timeline and ability to deliver by July 1, 2027, or, where special construction is required, by June 30, 2028	The credibility and completeness of the proposed implementation schedule, including any special construction schedule and its dependency on the E-Rate funding commitment date.
100%	Total	

The criteria listed in the table above, and the weights assigned to them, constitute the complete evaluation methodology for this solicitation. The price of E-Rate eligible products and services carries the single highest weight, as required by 47 C.F.R. § 54.511(a). During the vendor selection process, the Applicant reserves the right to treat an incumbent provider's current bill and/or current contract as a bid for evaluation purposes.

Applicant reserves sole discretion in proposal evaluation consistent with applicable law.

DISQUALIFICATION FACTORS

Proposals will be disqualified for the following reasons:

- Late submission
- Unauthorized communications
- Does not have a SPIN at the time of proposal submission
- Failure to meet specifications
- Failure to respond to all requested pricing for each Service Option the Offeror elects to propose
- Generic or non-responsive pricing
- Submission of a response generated by Artificial Intelligence that contains materially incomplete, inaccurate, or misleading information and/or is not tailored specifically to the Applicant and/or needs of the RFP.
- Inclusion of generic or overly broad pricing lists that do not reflect the specific requirements of this RFP.
- Failure to comply with procurement instructions
- Failure to provide required pricing worksheet
- Failure to price the E-Rate ineligible Southlyn location separately or the blending of ineligible costs into eligible line items.

INVOICING REQUIREMENTS

The Applicant reserves the sole right to select the invoicing method for the requested products and/or services. By submitting a proposal, the offeror acknowledges and accepts the Applicant's right to choose between the Billed Entity Applicant Reimbursement (BEAR) method or the Service Provider Invoicing (SPI) method.

BEAR Method (FCC Form 472): If the BEAR method is selected, the offeror shall invoice the Applicant for the full cost of the eligible products and/or services. The Applicant will then seek reimbursement for the discounted portion directly from USAC using FCC Form 472.

SPI Method (FCC Form 474): If the SPI method is selected, the Applicant's E-rate discount will be reflected on the FCC Form 471 and confirmed in the Funding Commitment Decision Letter (FCDL), if issued. The offeror shall invoice USAC directly for the discounted portion using FCC Form 474 and agrees not to invoice the Applicant for any amount covered by the E-rate discount.

Vendor Obligations:

- Timely invoicing cooperation
- Documentation support
- USAC compliance
- No disruption due to billing disputes

ADMINISTRATIVE, PROCUREMENT, AND E-RATE COMPLIANCE PROVISIONS

- Procurement Rights and Reservation of Authority
 - The Applicant reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to award contracts in whole, in part, to multiple vendors, or not at all, based on the Applicant's needs, available funding, and the requirements established in this solicitation.
 - The Applicant further reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, waive informalities or minor irregularities, request clarifications, and make award decisions determined to be in the best interest of the Applicant and consistent with all applicable E-Rate and public procurement requirements.
 - In the event of conflict between this RFP and applicable state/local procurement laws, applicable law shall control.
 - The Applicant may, at its sole discretion, extend proposal deadlines, amend procurement schedules, or cancel this solicitation in whole or in part if deemed necessary or advantageous.
- Proposal Submission, Public Disclosure, and Confidentiality
 - Submission of a proposal does not create any binding contractual obligation for the Applicant unless and until a formal written agreement and/or authorized purchase order has been fully executed.
 - Following contract award and execution, proposal documents may be subject to public inspection in accordance with applicable public records laws.
 - Offerors may designate specific portions of their proposals as "Proprietary" or "Confidential," provided such information is clearly identified and readily separable from non-confidential content. The Applicant will make

reasonable efforts to protect properly designated confidential information to the extent permitted by law.

- Pricing, service costs, and other cost-related information shall not be considered proprietary or confidential and may be publicly disclosed.
- **Contract Formation and Financial Protections**
 - The Applicant reserves the right to reevaluate the cost-effectiveness of contracted services throughout the contract term, consistent with contractual rights and E-Rate program requirements.
 - Offerors proposing products potentially subject to price fluctuations due to tariffs, import restrictions, or other governmental actions must clearly disclose affected products and provide a defined methodology for controlling or limiting future pricing adjustments.
- **Conflict of Interest and Competitive Integrity**
 - By submitting a proposal, each Offeror certifies that no actual or potential conflict of interest exists that would compromise the fairness of this procurement or create an unfair competitive advantage.
 - The Applicant will conduct this procurement in a fair, open, and competitive manner consistent with FCC E-Rate rules. No vendor, including incumbents, shall receive preferential treatment or improper advantage.
 - Any proposal determined to involve collusion, undisclosed conflicts, or improper competitive influence will be disqualified.
- **E-Rate Compliance Requirements**
 - This procurement is subject to all applicable Federal Communications Commission (FCC), Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC), and E-Rate program rules.
 - All participating vendors must comply with all E-Rate requirements, including but not limited to:
 - Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN) eligibility
 - FCC Red Light Rule compliance
 - Lowest Corresponding Price requirements
 - Debarment and suspension certifications
 - Gift rule compliance
 - Eligible services compliance
 - SPI invoicing capability, if required
 - Record retention obligations
 - Failure to maintain E-Rate compliance may result in proposal disqualification or contract termination.
- **Product Demonstrations and Trial Equipment Restrictions**
 - To preserve the integrity of the competitive bidding process, product demonstrations, vendor meetings, or equipment evaluations during the active procurement window may be restricted or denied.
 - Following the close of the competitive bidding period, temporary equipment loans for evaluation purposes may be permitted only if:
 - The duration is clearly limited

- Terms are documented
 - No improper competitive advantage is created
 - Demonstrations or evaluation equipment may only be accepted where permitted by law and where such activities do not compromise competitive fairness.
- Supply Chain Compliance Certification
 - By submitting a proposal, the Offeror certifies compliance with FCC Order 19-121 and all related federal supply chain security requirements.
 - Offerors further certify that proposed equipment and services do not include any equipment, services, or components from entities identified on the FCC's Covered List, including but not limited to Huawei Technologies Company, ZTE Corporation, or any successor-designated covered entities.
 - The Offeror acknowledges that non-compliance may result in proposal disqualification, contract cancellation, or other remedies as permitted by law.
- Installation Completion Deadline
 - All products and services must be delivered and installed in accordance with applicable E-Rate service delivery deadlines unless officially extended by FCC or USAC.

RECORD RETENTION / AUDIT REQUIREMENTS

Pursuant to 47 C.F.R. § 54.516, Service Providers are required to adhere to the following obligations regarding document retention, records production, and audits.

- Service Providers must retain all documents related to the delivery of discounted telecommunications and other supported services for a minimum of ten (10) years following the final day of service delivery. Additionally, any records that demonstrate compliance with statutory or regulatory requirements under the schools and libraries support mechanism must also be retained. The ten-year retention period is established by 47 C.F.R. § 54.516 and the FCC's E-Rate Modernization Order (FCC 14-99); FCC 04-190 imposed the earlier five-year period and is superseded.
- Upon request, Service Providers shall produce relevant records to any authorized representative, including auditors appointed by state education departments, the program Administrator, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), or any local, state, or federal agency with jurisdiction over the matter.
- Service Providers shall be subject to audits and investigations to verify compliance with all statutory and regulatory requirements applicable to the schools and libraries universal service support program. This includes compliance concerning the procurement, delivery, and usage of services and products.
- Service Providers may protect confidential information except where disclosure is required by FCC, USAC, governmental auditors, or applicable law.

- Service Providers are responsible for ensuring that any subcontractors they engage also comply fully with the FCC's requirements related to document retention, records production, and audits.

LOWEST CORRESPONDING PRICE

In accordance with 47 C.F.R. § 54.511, Service Providers are prohibited from submitting bids to, or charging, eligible schools, libraries, and consortia prices that exceed the Lowest Corresponding Price (LCP) for supported services. Exceptions apply only if the Federal Communications Commission, for interstate services, or the relevant state commission, for intrastate services, determines that the LCP is not compensatory. Promotional rates offered by a Service Provider for periods longer than ninety (90) days must be factored into the comparable rates used to establish the LCP.

All proposals submitted in response to this Form 470 must comply with the E-rate program requirement to offer the Lowest Corresponding Price (LCP). For further details, please refer to the official USAC guidance regarding Lowest Corresponding Price requirements.

COST OF PROPOSALS

All costs and expenses associated with the preparation and submission of proposals in response to this Scope of Work shall be borne exclusively by the vendor.

******* END OF RFP *******