Pacific Grove Unified School District

Information Technology Department
435 Hillcrest Ave., Pacific Grove, CA 93950

Request for Proposal
RFP: PGUSD Firewall 2027
E-Rate Year 2027-2028
FCC Form 470 #270002780

Proposals Due
Friday, December 11, 2026, not later than 2:00 p.m.

BIDDER ELIGIBILITY:

To be considered for this project Bidders must be registered with the Universal Service Administrative Company to participate in the Schools and Libraries Program commonly known as E-Rate. Bidder's Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN) and Service Provider Name must be shown on the Bidder Form.

For additional information on the E-Rate Program, please visit the Schools and Libraries (E-Rate) website at https://www.usac.org/e-rate/

Note: The terms "Bid" and Bidder" throughout this document are intended to have the same meaning as "Proposal" and "Proposer." We use those terms to most closely align our language with text contained in USAC's Competitive Bidding Process, which allows considering other factors than price in the evaluation of bids/proposals, with eligible costs being the most heavily weighted factor.

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED:

Pacific Grove Unified School District (aka: PGUSD, District, the district) seeks E-Rate proposals for fully managed E-Rate Eligible Category Two Firewall Service to provide additional security for a minimum of 2,000 students and 500 staff members.

Background:
District currently has a next-generation enhanced firewall service that is provided by Internet service provider Monterey County Office of Education (MCOE), which is a Local Education Agency. The Internet Service is provided over the connection between MCOE and PGUSD via a ten-gigabit fiber optic transport terminating at the district's data center at 835 Forest Ave., Pacific Grove, California, 93950.

The contract for that firewall service will expire on June 30, 2027. This E-Rate bidding process is intended to identify the most cost-effective means of providing like functionality beginning on July 1, 2027. Due to limited technical staff and other factors, District prefers a fully managed firewall service, as opposed to a district-managed solution. Any equipment required at the district's data center to provide that functionality shall be owned, maintained, and managed by awarded service provider.

Requirements:
The proposed solution should be operational 24 X 7 with 99.9% uptime and support a minimum of three zones: Inside, a single DMZ, and Outside via the existing Internet Service, and should provide the full capabilities of a next-generation firewall including, but not limited to, uninterrupted support for digital learning initiatives, remote learning, security of sensitive data such as student records, security of education-related business functions, and a CIPA-compliant content filter.

The solution will be able to accommodate up to 20 VPN Site-to-Site or Remote Access simultaneous connections.

The solution is to be fully managed by the service provider including all updates, security patches and a minimum of daily updates to the Palo Alto External Dynamic List or equivalent. District's current firewall policies will be implemented at the beginning of the contract. Change requests coming from the district will be implemented by the service provider who will be able to provide industry standard best practice feedback on those change requests as well as suggestions based on industry standard best practices.

Service provider support will be available, at minimum, 7am-6pm Pacific Time weekdays with a two-day response time for change requests and within 1 hour for critical issues.

The service provider will provide a way for District staff to test connectivity to the firewall and the firewall's connectivity to the Internet to help isolate connectivity issues.

All work or equipment required to deliver the service including design, connectivity, implementation, cabling, rack or wall space, etc., needed on District property shall be clearly described in proposals, including costs and whether those costs are eligible for funding under the E-Rate program.

Please also include in pricing the number of free change requests per month and the cost of changes that exceed that limit if applicable.

Term of Agreement:
The desired term for the service is twelve months at two gigabits per second, with the option to extend the service for up to three additional one-year terms, including the option to support bandwidths of up to ten gigabits per second after June 30, 2028, or later during the life of the agreement.

TERMS OF THE AGREEMENT

1. The service start date shall be July 1, 2027. District will not be responsible for any charges incurred prior to July 1, 2027, unless previously agreed in writing.

2. E-Rate program rules require a contract signed by both parties before filing for funding. The contract shall be interpreted, construed, and given effect in all respects according to the laws of the State of California.

3. The term of the agreement should be for one year with the option to extend for up to three additional years at the sole discretion of District, including the option to support additional traffic up to ten gigabits per second after first year.

4. District reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to waive irregularities and technicalities at District's sole discretion in order to make purchases that are in the district's best interest, provided that such actions or decisions do not conflict with the E-Rate procurement guidelines.

5. Vendor shall invoice USAC directly for reimbursement via the Service Provider Invoice method on District approval of charges and shall accept responsibility for invoicing prior to invoice deadlines.

INSTRUCTIONS TO VENDORS

E-Rate Requirements
Responses to this Request for Proposal must be in compliance with the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) rules and provisions based on and related to the Telecommunications Act of 1996, popularly known as E-Rate, administered by the Schools and Libraries Division (SLD) of the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC).

Clarifications
Questions regarding this RFP should be submitted via email to Louis Algaze, Director of Technology Systems, at lalgaze@pgusd.org no later than 3:00 p.m. on Thursday, November 6, 2026. Responses to questions will be posted in EPC before 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 10, 2026.

Proposal Submittals:
Proposals should be submitted via email to Louis Algaze, Director of Technology Systems, at lalgaze@pgusd.org. Proposals are due before 2:00 p.m. on Friday, December 11, 2026.

Each Proposal submitted must include Bidder Name, Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN), RFP title, date and time due, and the name and number of Bidder's representative to contact with questions.

District will not be responsible for any costs associated with proposal preparation.

Vendor's authorized representative may withdraw proposals only by written request received before the proposal due date and time.

There will not be a public opening of proposals due to the multiple evaluation criteria. A list of Proposers and E-Rate evaluation matrix will be provided on request after the project is awarded.

Required/Requested Submittal Documents:

Proposal Response Form: Required. Form must be signed by a person authorized to make the offer on the company's behalf.

Executive Summary: Required. Please include a brief description of the solution including any equipment required on site and how the service will work with the existing Internet Service as described herein.

Contract: Desired and recommended. Contract for proposed product or service should be included with the Proposal, preferably ready for District signatures on Board approval. If that is not possible, please provide a representative example of the agreement to be used.

Pricing: Required. Please provide annual pricing for twelve months at two gigabits per second and tiered pricing for up to three additional one-year terms at speeds ranging from two gigabits per second to up to ten gigabits per second.

References: Desired and recommended. Please submit a minimum of three (3) references for similar services, preferably K12 School Districts in California. Please include a description of the service provided and contact information for the person to contact with questions, including name, title, email address and phone number.

Proposal Response Form
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To the Board of Trustees
Pacific Grove Unified School District
Pacific Grove, California

The undersigned agrees to furnish the services for the amount set forth and in accordance with the Request for Proposal and all related documents.

Company Name	
SPIN Number (E-Rate)	
Proposer's Name	
Title	
Mailing Address	
City/State/ZipCode	
Phone	
Fax	
Email	

EVALUATION / SELECTION CRITERIA

Percent	Selection Criteria
40%	Total eligible costs including all eligible recurring and nonrecurring costs for twelve months of use.
20%	Ineligible costs associated with migrating to a different platform or changing providers including staff time, rack space, power, and environmental requirements for onsite equipment, if needed, and change charges as described on page 3 of this RFP.
15%	District Technology Staff assessment of how well the proposed product or service meets the district's service requirements as described in this RFP.
15%	Ability to provide the functionality as a service, as opposed to a hardware-based firewall on site.
10%	Vendor's reputation based on District's own experiences, references provided, and service level agreements.

End of RFP