Graves County Schools
Mayfield, Kentucky

Request for Proposals
Wide Area Network (WAN) Connectivity

Proposal Submission Deadline:
3:00 PM on December 7, 2026

Jack A. Smith
Chief Information Officer
270.328.1557
Jack.Smith@graves.kyschools.us

Introduction

The Graves County School District (GCSD) is requesting proposals to provide a high-speed Wide Area Network (WAN) solution that is E-Rate Category 1 eligible. The WAN will allow for reliable and secure transmission of data, voice, and video via lit fiber, dark fiber, or other high-speed technology. The service will connect the existing six outlying campuses to Graves County High School (GCHS). The service provider will hand off a minimum 10 Gbps connection with the capability to upgrade to a 40 Gbps connection. This service is currently delivered via a leased dark fiber service.

The services derived from this RFP will be entirely contingent upon full funding from the federal E-Rate program (Schools and Libraries Division) and the available funds within the GCSD Technology Department. Services, in full or in part, may or may not be undertaken at the sole discretion of the GCSD.

GCSD requires that the awarded service provider must be a participating E-Rate service provider and have a valid SPIN. GCSD also requires that each service provider be thoroughly familiar with any rules/regulations regarding their participation in the E-Rate program. Providers will be required to comply with all applicable requirements pertaining to fair labor, state, and local government.

If the winning solution is leased and over $100,000, GCSD will be required to receive lease approval from the Commissioner of the Kentucky Department of Education pursuant to KRS 65.944(1)(b) and 702 KAR 3:340.

Payment for invoices must be Board of Education approved. Depending on the date the invoice arrives, GCSD may take up to 45 days after receiving an invoice to submit payment. Graves County School District reserves the right to deny any or all proposals associated with this RFP, even with approved SLD funding. GCSD does not discriminate in educational programs, activities or employment, on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, or disability.

This document does not replace any local, state, or federal code/law/regulation, either partially or wholly. The contractor must be aware of all codes/laws/regulations that may impact this project. If this document or any document listed herein is in conflict with each other or any federal, state, or local code/law/regulation, the Service Provider has the responsibility to determine and adhere to the most recent release when developing the proposal.

Jack A. Smith
Chief Information Officer
270.328.1557
Jack.Smith@graves.kyschools.us

Scope of Work

The Graves County School District (owner) is requesting proposals for replacing the fiber optic connections between the GCHS and six other campuses throughout the county.

Proposals may include lit fiber (vendor-owned, maintained, lit, and vendor-managed), dark fiber (vendor-owned and maintained, unlit, and district-managed), or other high-speed technologies to connect the buildings and deliver reliable and secure data, voice, and video between buildings. Lease agreements will be for an initial 5-year period with three additional 5-year renewal options until a total of 20 years has passed (initial 5-year period, followed by three 5-year renewal options). Each 5-year extension will be exercised if agreed upon by both the district and the winning vendor. The initial contract must reference the initial 5-year lease and all three 5-year extensions.

Specifics on technical requirements, site locations, additional information, on-site visits, questions, proposal requirements (including costs), deadlines, and the evaluation process are listed in the sections below. Offerors are welcome to submit multiple responses; however, each response must be in its own envelope and marked accordingly.

Technical Proposal

Respondents to this request are welcome to provide a solution they feel best provides the needed services to the district. Each proposed solution must be capable of carrying multiple data services such as computer data, voice over IP, and digital video. It must also be compatible with Kentucky Department of Education guidelines and all KETS master contract network hardware manufacturers. The manufacturers can be located here: http://education.ky.gov/districts/tech/kpur/Pages/Net-Hardware.aspx.

Below is a breakdown of two types of services that can be proposed. The proposal must clearly indicate which of the two types of service they are providing. While this RFP focuses on solutions that are provided via a fiber cable, any solution that will provide a high-speed connection in accordance with the specifications outlined in this request is welcome. For solutions that do not use an optic fiber as the method of transportation, we ask that you also provide which of the two options listed below your solution is most like. As an example, a proposal that uses a satellite solution would be a vendor-owned and maintained solution that is also managed by the vendor; therefore, it would be most comparable to Option A: Lit Fiber.

Jack A. Smith
Chief Information Officer
270.328.1557
Jack.Smith@graves.kyschools.us

Option A: Lit Fiber (vendor-owned and maintained, managed service)

1. A minimum of two strands of single-mode fiber with LC connectors will be handed off to the Owner at each location.
2. All connections must provide assurance of the bandwidth requested.
3. As a managed service, the fiber should be pre-lit.
4. All fiber pathways shall be point-to-point between owner sites with efforts to use the shortest path available.
5. All equipment must be terminated in a rack- or wall-mounted patch panel at each site. Vendors are welcome to use existing fiber patch panels if available.
6. All joints should be fused and not jumpered
7. Multiple provider agreements are acceptable with a single billing agent with a single SPIN number. If this is the provided solution, please clearly state all providers in the proposal.
8. Each remote site should have its own strands of optic fiber or other dedicated high-speed technology. Strands or other high-speed technology can be in the same bundle if desired, but traffic sent or received over the strand or other high-speed technology must be for only one building and not multiple buildings.
9. Fiber shall successfully pass all NECA and FOA fiber optics requirements, and test results shall be provided to the owner.
10. Each fiber strand must have a maximum optical attenuation loss (light loss) of 0.25 dB/km at 1550 and 0.30 dB/km 1310 nm at any point during the lease as read by the network's switching environment.
11. Fiber shall use existing poles and/or conduit on GCSD grounds whenever possible. It should also follow existing communication routes into the building where possible. Existing conduits should be considered before trenching or burrowing new routes. Any new entries must meet National and State Electrical Codes and be preapproved by the GCSD Director of Facilities and Chief Information Officer.
12. Managed service provider will only provide Layer II connectivity, no Layer III routing.
13. GCSD shall not be required to contact the provider when making VLAN configuration changes or traffic changes to the network.
14. Required data speed of 10 Gbs and ability to easily upgrade up to 40 Gbps at a later time without infrastructure change. Pricing shall be provided for 10 Gbps with notations for any price increases on higher speeds.
15. GCSD shall not be bound to select the same connectivity rate for all sites district-wide.
16. Service provider shall in no way place restrictions on the content, data, or data types that may be transmitted across the fiber network.

Jack A. Smith
Chief Information Officer
270.328.1557
Jack.Smith@graves.kyschools.us

17. Service provider shall not sniff or inspect any data that is transmitted by the Owner without the express written consent of the district for each instance and only for the purpose of troubleshooting networking-related issues.
18. Service provider will be responsible for all fiber repair(s) at no cost to the district.
19. Service provider will use commercially reasonable efforts in keeping with industry standards to ensure that the services are available to the Owner twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. In the event of prolonged loss of service, provisions will exist for service credit.
20. Service shall be compatible with Kentucky Department of Education guidelines and all KETS master contract network hardware manufacturers. The manufacturers can be located here: http://education.ky.gov/districts/tech/kpur/Pages/Net-Hardware.aspx
21. The provider must be responsible for all physical and infrastructure changes required by city, county, state, or federal agencies, and must adhere to all local, state, and federal codes/laws/regulations.
22. The service must connect to the Owner's existing network equipment (no new equipment shall be required to be purchased by the district). Currently, the district uses Extreme equipment with optics using LC Connectors.
23. The service provider shall be responsible for determining all make-ready charges, application, and ongoing fees for right-of-way, pole rental agreements, and permits throughout the life of the contract, or for the life of the infrastructure installed. If any charges on these items are passed on to the district, those charges must be specified in the proposal.
24. The WAN must remain isolated from traffic on the other service provider's networks or transmission medium.
25. A map of the anticipated path of the fiber is requested. This is to gain a better understanding of paths that may not be a direct route from building to building.
26. All proposals should give the following information:
    a. Name and contact information for billing questions.
    b. Name and contact information for technical questions.
    c. Name and contact information for primary and secondary contact for outage support.
    d. Initial response time for reported issues.

Option B: Dark Fiber (vendor-owned and maintained, unmanaged service)

1. A minimum of two strands of single-mode fiber with LC connectors will be handed off to the Owner at each location.
2. All connections must provide assurance of the bandwidth requested.
3. GCSD will light the dark fiber solution.
4. All fiber pathways shall be point-to-point between owner sites with efforts to use the shortest path available.

Jack A. Smith
Chief Information Officer
270.328.1557
Jack.Smith@graves.kyschools.us

5. All equipment must be terminated in a rack- or wall-mounted patch panel at each site. Vendors are welcome to use existing fiber patch panels if available.
6. All joints should be fused and not jumpered
7. Multiple provider agreements are acceptable with a single billing agent with a single SPIN number. If this is the provided solution, please clearly state all providers in the proposal.
8. Each remote site should have its own strands of optic fiber or other dedicated high-speed technology. Strands or other high-speed technology can be in the same bundle if desired, but traffic sent or received over the strand or other high-speed technology must be for only one building and not multiple buildings.
9. Fiber shall successfully pass all NECA and FOA fiber optics requirements, and test results shall be provided to the owner.
10. Each fiber strand must have a maximum optical attenuation loss of 0.25 dB/km at 1550 and 0.30 dB/km 1310 nm at any point during the lease as read by the network's switching environment.
11. Fiber shall use existing poles and/or conduit on GCSD grounds whenever possible. It should also follow existing communication routes into the building where possible. Existing conduits should be considered before trenching or burrowing new routes. Any new entries must meet National and State Electrical Codes and be preapproved by the GCSD Director of Facilities and Chief Information Officer.
12. Managed service provider will only provide Layer I connectivity
13. GCSD shall not be required to contact the provider when making VLAN configuration changes or traffic changes to the network.
14. Single-mode fiber must support speeds up to 40 Gbps. The speed at which data is transmitted over the fiber will be at the discretion of GCSD and should not affect the cost associated with the lease.
15. Service provider shall in no way place restrictions on the content, data, or data types that may be transmitted across the fiber network.
16. Service provider shall not sniff or inspect any data that is transmitted by the Owner without the express written consent for each instance and only for the purpose of troubleshooting networking-related issues.
17. Service provider will be responsible for all fiber repair(s) at no cost to the district.
18. Service provider will use commercially reasonable efforts in keeping with industry standards to ensure that services are available to the Owner twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. In the event of a prolonged loss of service, provisions will exist for service credit.
19. Service shall be compatible with Kentucky Department of Education guidelines and all KETS master contract network hardware manufacturers. The manufacturers can be located here: http://education.ky.gov/districts/tech/kpur/Pages/Net-Hardware.aspx
20. The provider must be responsible for all physical and infrastructure changes required by city, county, state, or federal agencies, and must adhere to all local, state, and federal codes/laws/regulations.

Jack A. Smith
Chief Information Officer
270.328.1557
Jack.Smith@graves.kyschools.us

21. The service must connect to the Owner's existing network equipment (no new equipment shall be required to be purchased by the district). Currently, the district uses Extreme equipment with optics using LC Connectors.
22. The service provider shall be responsible for determining all make-ready charges, application, and ongoing fees for right-of-way, pole rental agreements, and permits throughout the life of the contract, or for the life of the infrastructure installed. If any charges on these items are passed on to the district, those charges must be specified in the proposal.
23. The WAN must remain isolated from traffic on the service provider's other networks or transmission medium.
24. A map of the anticipated path of the fiber is requested. This is to gain a better understanding of paths that may not be a direct route from building to building.
25. All proposals should give the following information:
    a. Name and contact information for billing questions.
    b. Name and contact information for technical questions.
    c. Name and contact information for primary and secondary contact for outage support.
    d. Initial response time for reported issues.

District Locations

The following are locations that will need to be connected. Each connection will originate at the core site, Graves County High School.

Core Site:
Graves County High School
1220 Eagles Way
Mayfield, KY 42066

Remote Sites:
Fancy Farm Elementary
270 State Route 339 South
Fancy Farm, KY 42039

Farmington Elementary
7730 State Route 121 South
Mayfield, KY 42066

Sedalia Elementary
5252 State Route 97
Mayfield, KY 42066

Remote Sites:
Symsonia Elementary
11730 State Route 131
Symsonia, KY 42082

Wingo Elementary
449 Lebanon Street
Wingo, KY 42088

Mayfield Youth Dev. Center
3179 State Route 45 South
Mayfield, Kentucky 42066

Jack A. Smith
Chief Information Officer
270.328.1557
Jack.Smith@graves.kyschools.us

Additional Information, Onsite Visits, and Questions

Approvals Required

The services derived from this RFP will be entirely contingent upon full funding from the federal E-Rate program (Schools and Libraries Division) and the available funds within the GCSD Technology Department. Services, in full or in part, may or may not be undertaken at the sole discretion of the GCSD.

Additionally, if the total cost of the lease exceeds $100,000, pursuant to KRS 65.944(1)(b) and 702 KAR 3:340, the school district must receive approval from Kentucky's education commissioner before entering into leases that exceed $100,000. While the district will coordinate this approval, each response is required to provide a point of contact for questions that may arise during the approval process.

Site Tours

On-site tours are not required, but can be scheduled. On-site tours must be requested with at least a 3-day notice, are contingent on the CIO's availability, and **must occur before 3:00 PM on November 17, 2026**.

Questions

All questions regarding this RFP should be directed to Jack Smith via email at Jack.Smith@graves.kyschools.us. Vendors who anticipate responding to the RFP and would like answers to any questions asked should also notify Jack Smith via Jack.Smith@graves.kyschools.us. Informing us of your intent to respond in no way changes your requirement to submit a response in advance of the stated deadline. In addition to responding to questions by the author and those who notify that they anticipate responding, answers to all questions will be posted on the district's website and uploaded to the E-Rate portal.

Questions must be asked no later than 3:00 PM on November 19, 2026. **Answers will be posted no later than 3:00 PM on November 23, 2026**. If a question is asked that results in a substantive correction to the RFP, a new deadline for on-site tours, questions, and submissions will be established. Any updated schedule will be emailed to interested vendors, and posted in the Q&A document on the district's website and on the E-Rate portal.

Jack A. Smith
Chief Information Officer
270.328.1557
Jack.Smith@graves.kyschools.us

Proposal Requirements

This section outlines what the contents must be in the response of the vendor. Failure to provide all information, or any inaccuracy or misstatement, may be sufficient cause for rejection of the proposal or rescission of an award. Conversely, the District reserves the right to ask for specific information from a respondent where a Vendor did not provide the requested information. Vendors are welcome to submit multiple responses; however, each response must be in its own envelope and marked accordingly.

1. Cover Letter
   The cover letter must include the following information.
   - Key contact information
     - Name of company
     - Address of company
     - Company's USAC E-Rate SPIN Number
     - Name of multiple providers, if applicable
     - Primary contact for the proposal (name, phone, and email)
     - Primary contact for billing questions if awarded (name, phone, and email)
     - Primary contact for technical questions if awarded (name, phone, and email)
     - Primary contact and back-up contact for outage support if awarded (name, phone, and email)
   - Company Overview
     - Provide an introduction and general description of your firm's background, and nature of business activities.
     - If your firm is the subsidiary of a larger corporation, describe the relationship and the extent to which your parent corporation is financially obligated to uphold the commitments made by your firm.
     - Has your firm ever been suspended, decertified, or barred by any governmental agency from providing services, even temporarily? If yes, explain.
     - Briefly describe your firm's background and depth of ability to ensure services are provided:
       - Number of employees.
       - Applicable licenses, certifications, and expiration dates.
       - Partnering plans with local service providers and/or subcontractors
   - Specific Experience and Past Performance
     - Describe how long your firm has been providing substantial similar services to those identified in this RFP

Jack A. Smith
Chief Information Officer
270.328.1557
Jack.Smith@graves.kyschools.us

- Describe the company's experience with USAC program, including how long it has been active in the program.
- Describe any other features of your proposal that may add value to the District's LAN/WAN and enhance service to its students or employees.
- Explain the company's ability to provide service and support and the resources available to meet the demands of keeping service available as required for a school district.

2. References
   - Please provide at least three (3) previous client references for whom you have provided similar services during the past five years (January 1, 2020 to the present). Clients will ideally be educational entities located in Kentucky.
     - For each reference, provide the client name, address, contact person, telephone number, email address, and a description of the services provided. Please also identify the period during which services were provided.
     - The District reserves the right to contact any references listed if it is in the District's best interest to do so.
3. Project Approach / Technical Proposal
   - An explanation of the type of service they are providing, including but not limited to, which option (A or B) their solution corresponds to.
     - Explain the method by which data will be traveling
     - Include technical details about the method for better understanding of the type of technology being used.
     - Include the speed for any solution for Option A.
     - As a reminder, any high-speed connection that matches the requirements outlined above can be submitted and will be considered.
   - Describe the timeline of implementation needed to ensure the connection is operational by July 1, 2027.
   - List the guaranteed response time after initial contact of a reported issue.
   - Include maps of the anticipated paths of the fiber. This is to gain a better understanding of paths that may not be a direct route from building to building.
   - Confirm and agree to the requirements outlined in the Technical Proposal section of this RFP.
4. Costs
   - All costs associated with the project should be included in the response. This includes but is not limited to:
     - Itemized listing of One-time costs

Jack A. Smith
Chief Information Officer
270.328.1557
Jack.Smith@graves.kyschools.us

- Itemized listing of Reoccurring costs per site
  - Please also include the frequency of billing (i.e., monthly, semi-annually, annually, etc.).
- Price increases for faster speeds for lit fiber (or equivalent) response, and the rate of speed for each increase in price.
- Itemized listing of any make-ready charges, application, and ongoing fees for right-of-way, pole rental agreements, and permits, if applicable.

- The service credit for prolonged loss of service and the point at which the credit will begin.
- Vendors are also welcome to include additional information about the financial aspects of the response as they deem appropriate.

5. Sample Contract
   - Each response must include a sample of the anticipated contract with their proposal for review.
   - The contract must take into account the details included within this proposal, and must include all optional renewals.
   - Graves County Schools reserves the right to adjust the contract based on the policies of the district, and the laws and requirements of the local, state, and federal governments.

Proposal Deadline, Selection Process, and Awards

Proposal Deadline

The USAC-SLD Guidelines, available at www.usac.org, make it clear in Step 3 that applicants must use "an open and fair competitive bidding process" in order to qualify for E-Rate funding. **Proposals must be in written form, in a sealed envelope with the company's name and type of service provided, and received no later than 3:00 p.m. on December 7, 2026**. Proposals can be delivered to:

Graves County Board of Education
WAN Connectivity RFP
2290 St Rt 121 North
Mayfield, KY 42066

Jack A. Smith
Chief Information Officer
270.328.1557
Jack.Smith@graves.kyschools.us

Any responses received after this deadline will be disqualified.

- If mailing, allow for ample time for your proposal to be received before the deadline.
- If hand-delivered, be aware of the office hours of the Graves County Board of Education. Routine office hours are Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 3:30 PM Central. Hours are subject to change and are posted on the district's website and on the door of the building.

GCSD is not responsible for mail not received from vendors pertaining to proposals. Vendors may contact the Technology Department to confirm receipt.

Selection Process

A number of factors will influence the district's decision in selecting the vendor. These factors include (but are not limited to) a technical evaluation based upon the vendor's ability to deliver these products and services in a timely manner, cost of the project (both for the initial 5-year lease and all subsequent extensions), vendor evaluation based upon vendor reputation and past performance with similar projects in local area school districts and businesses, past experience with the company and the employees of the company, service and support resources, and knowledge of and experience with USF policies and procedures.

Please note that the GCSD will select the most cost-effective provider based upon the best overall solution and value. Per federal guidelines, the cost of eligible products and services will be the primary factor (but not the sole factor) in determining the most cost-effective solution. Cost effectiveness is determined in part by both short-term and long-term cost analysis.

Awarding of contract

All submissions will be opened at 3:05 p.m. on December 7, 2026, at the Graves County Board of Education. The deadline may be extended if questions result in a substantive correction to the RFP. In this instance, the new deadline will be noted in the Q&A document on the district website and E-rate portal, and known interested vendors will be notified via email. After opening, but at an undetermined later time, the GCSD administration will evaluate proposals and select a provider or choose to reject all proposals. If a provider is selected by the administration, the School Board will be asked to approve the successful service provider at its next scheduled meeting. After approval by the board, approval will also be obtained from Kentucky's education commissioner if required, and a Form 471 will be filed with USAC.