REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

E-RATE Funding Year 27-28

NETWORK UPGRADE PROJECT

Tate County School District

Technology Department

574 Parkway

Coldwater, MS 38618

Contact: Philip Casey

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District URL: www.tatecountyschools.org

STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS

And

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

RFP # ErateNetwork27-28

Subject

RFP - The Tate County School District (the district) will accept sealed statements of qualifications (SOQ) and proposals from qualified firms/vendors to provide services necessary for installation and configuration of network equipment for the FY 27-28 (E-RATE) cycle. Bidders must have a Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN) and this SPIN must be included in the bid proposal. Those interested shall submit a signed, sealed SOQ and cost proposal to the district by 10:00 AM local time, December 16, 2026 at the address listed on page one of this RFP.

Purpose

Proposals are being sought by the district for the cost-effective replacement of aging Aruba network switches with Aruba CX 6300L or equivalent switches, installation of supplemental wireless access points to address remaining coverage needs from the prior project, and installation of uninterruptible power supplies (UPS) in designated network closets.

General Requirements

The District requires a turnkey network upgrade solution that integrates with its existing Aruba switching and Aruba Instant wireless environment. The scope includes supply, installation, configuration, testing, labeling, and documentation of switches, wireless access points, and UPS equipment. Final quantities and placement will be determined by district needs and the mandatory vendor site visit.

The District prefers HPE Aruba CX 6300L or equivalent switches compatible with existing Aruba infrastructure, Aruba access points or equivalent compatible with the District's existing Aruba Instant management environment, and appropriately sized UPS units for designated MDF/IDF closets. Vendors proposing equivalent products must document compatibility and management integration. Vendors must state applicable certifications and maintain at least one full-time qualified Aruba-certified professional or equivalent.

Terms used throughout this RFP:

USAC–Universal Service Administrative Company

SPIN –Service Provider Identification Number

FCDL–Funding Commitment Decision Letter

FCC–Federal Communications Commission

SLD–School and Library District

USF — Universal Service Fund

All proposals and supporting documentation must be sent to:

(*Submittal should be clearly labeled on the outside of the submittal)*

Tate County School District

FY 27-28 Network Upgrade Project

RFP # ErateNetwork27-28

Submittal should be addressed to:

Tate County School District

SEE ADDRESS ON PAGE ONE OF THIS RFP

One original and two copies of proposals and statements of qualifications are to be prepared and delivered either by mail or Federal Express to the District on or before 10:00 AM local time, December 16, 2026 where they will be time and date stamped. In addition, the bid must be broken down per school building and totals per school campus must be shown, as well as a grand total for the entire district project (PDF and Excel files must be submitted). All of the above bid documents must also be provided in electronic format on one jump drive. Please view the district's website for instructions on how to access the electronic bid server or contact the school district office. Please do not fax proposals.

Basis of Award

- E-rate approval by USAC
- The bidder must have SLD SPIN
- References of at least two installations of similar application size and complexity.
- Please see "Vendor Requirements" on the following pages for additional information.

- Please also see “Criteria for Selection” in more detail.

Selection Schedule

Event	Date(s)	Time
Board Approval of RFP	November 10, 2026	
Release of RFP to vendors	November 11, 2026	
Vendor Site Visit Meeting	December 2, 2026	10:00AM
Deadline for Vendor Questions	December 9, 2026	5:00PM
Deadline for Submission of Proposals	December 16, 2026	10:00AM
Opening of Proposals (TCSD District Office)	December 16, 2026	10:30AM
Board Approval of Winning Bidder (Tentative)	January 12, 2027	

Proposers are prohibited from contacting or lobbying members of the school board, school district administrators, school district employees, school district contractors, or school district consultants. Failure to conform to this condition will be grounds for disqualification of the proposer. Questions regarding the RFP may be emailed to the address listed on page one of this RFP before December 9, 2026, at 5:00 PM. A response within 3 business days will be posted on the district’s website and/or emailed to all bidders. It will be the responsibility of the vendor/bidder to check the website daily for any changes to the RFP or the listing of bidder questions and answers that may arise.

NON-APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS

In the event funds are not appropriated by the School District governing body in any fiscal period for payments due under RFP # ErateNetwork27-28, then the Technology Director, or Superintendent's designee(s), will immediately notify the successful vendor(s), or designee(s), of such occurrence and this contract will terminate on the last day of the fiscal period for which appropriations were received without penalty or expense to the School District of any kind whatsoever, accept other payments herein agreed upon for which funds will have been appropriated and budgeted or are otherwise available.

AWARD OF SOME OR THE ENTIRE PROJECT MAY BE SUBJECT TO THE AVAILABILITY OF DISTRICT FUNDING AND PROJECT NEEDS.

Proposer's response must confirm proposed terms remain available for the project term July 1, 2027, through June 30, 2028. Work will include installation and configuration of network switches, supplemental wireless access points, and network closet UPS units, including necessary related components and services. Proposed solutions must integrate with the District's existing network environment. Project completion is scheduled for June 30, 2028. The District reserves the right to waive informalities and reject any or all proposals. Proposals must include the information requested in this RFP.

MANDATORY VENDOR SITE VISIT MEETING

A **mandatory** vendor site visit meeting will be held on the date and time listed under Selection Schedule at the beginning of the RFP at the school District central office and proceeding to the respective school campuses. Any questions received will be discussed at that time and responses will be posted on the district web site for everyone to review after the walk-throughs have been completed. Written questions will be allowed for any vendor interested in responding to the District's RFP and responses again will be posted on the web site. **The district will accept only ONE bid per vendor.** This Network Upgrade Project will be awarded to a SINGLE vendor that can quote, install, all network equipment requested/required. The School District requires a "turnkey" solution for this project. Requested paper copies and electronic copies of the proposal and other required documentation must be sent in a sealed envelope clearly marked as listed at the beginning of the RFP. This Network Upgrade Project will include preferred equipment preference information and will be provided to each vendor who attends the vendor site visit meeting. This information will include a listing of equipment specifications and school campus maps with explanations. (If necessary) The equipment specification list provided is a minimum guideline list. If the bidder wishes to add to the district's equipment list to improve the functionality of their proposed equipment, the bidder is encouraged to do so. Therefore, attendance on this walk-through is of utmost importance to allow the prospective bidder to receive a detailed equipment list and be able to visit each school campus. The electronic bid server information will also be discussed at the mandatory vendor visit.

ADDITIONAL WARRANTY INSTRUCTIONS

The successful proposer must warrant its material and workmanship for a period of one year (for items requiring purchase and installation). Their respective manufacturers warrant all other products and material under a separate warranty. **Warranty for "outright purchase" of equipment and software should include at least 5 years for access points.** No refurbished or "gray market" equipment will be accepted. All equipment must be new and "out of-box" with full warranty and support.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

The district will utilize the following criteria (*as the basis for the proposal evaluations & selection*).

Factor	Weight
Price of the ELIGIBLE Equipment, Services & Warranties	25%
Prior Experience with the District	15%
Personnel Qualifications, Professionalism & Scope of Work	10%
Management Integration w/ Current Network	15%
Company Provides all Services (No sub-contractors)	15%
Bid Documentation Includes Excel Spreadsheet of Quoted Equipment	10%
Preference to Mississippi Based Companies Attending Site Visit Meeting	10%
Total	100%

The district reserves the right to select outright a single proposer, and to waive the finalists' state of the evaluation process in the event a Proposer has total points scored significantly higher than all the other Proposers responding to this RFP. The district in its sole discretion may accept or reject any or all responses to this RFP and may waive all formalities, technicalities, and irregularities. All bidders are placed on notice that award of the RFP will be based upon the products and services best suited to the district. The sole judgment of the district on such matters shall be final. The district has identified the factors itemized above under scoring criteria as critical to a company's ability to effectively assist the district's integration of technology. To be considered for evaluation, bidders must provide relevant responses to all sections of this RFP.

(100 evaluation points are possible). A separate response is requested for each criteria section. Appropriate labeling required. (See details of each factor below and on the following pages).

A. Pricing (All Eligible Equipment, , Services and Warranty)

- Proposer must abide by the district's bid policy.

- Proposer must abide by the state of Mississippi bid laws.
- Proposer must provide specific price quotes for eligible services. The district reserves the right to select a combination of pricing, services and/or Proposer(s) that appears best suited to meet the needs of the district. The proposer must allocate to the extent that a clear delineation can be made between eligible and ineligible components. The proposer(s) must provide school campus bid totals, as well as total cost for the entire project.

- Prior Experience with the School District

The district has also determined that a company's background, experience, and financial stability are essential for the success of a long-term relationship with its selected Proposer(s). Proposers responding to this RFP should include information about their company's experience, financial stability, and quality of services and products and satisfaction of their clients. A minimum of three (3) references (school districts preferred) should be included in the bid document.

- Personnel Qualifications, Professionalism & Scope of Work

The district is seeking (an) E-rate Proposer(s) that has the depth, breadth, and quality of resources necessary to complete all phases of a broad technology and service project. In addition, the timely availability of these resources and related support elements will be critical to project success. Describe the various resources from your company that will be made available to assist the district in the execution of its mission in performance of each scope of work (SOW). Provide resumes and related experience summaries to demonstrate the competencies and experience of typical personnel who would be assigned to the district program. Provide a list of industry standard certified employees and their certifications. Proposers must provide SOW and contract information for each school campus project being proposed.

- Management Integration w/ Current Network

The district requires a network that will continue to provide the district with a modern, efficient, and reliable network to support bandwidth and data and provide all needed capabilities within the district school buildings. Reliability and high performance are key requirements of this networking plan, as the district network continues to support the technology needs of the future. Vendor's proposal provides interoperability with the current District environment. Seamless integration with the current network.

- Company provides all services (***no sub-contractors***)

The district is interested in providers that provide all components, installations, and configurations for this RFP without sub-contractors.

- Bid documentation includes Excel spreadsheets of all quoted equipment.

The district requests that all bid/quote documentation also include Excel spreadsheets to allow for seamless upload to the E-Rate 471 application process.

- Mississippi Based Companies Attending Site Visit Meeting (K-12 Experience) The district is interested in providers that understand the technology, administrative, and instructional challenges facing today's educators, children, and administrators. The education environment is vastly changing with challenges that make technology decisions more important as they reach the district constituencies. The respondent must show that their solutions are sustainable within the framework of the district's resources to implement and maintain ongoing operations and that future support is local and Mississippi based.

STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS FORMAT

Please provide the following information in the same format prescribed by this questionnaire. Supplemental materials providing additional information may be attached, but the information requested below is to be provided in this format and sequence. Please provide succinct responses to the following questions and limit those responses to the page allowances set out in each item.

- FIRM INFORMATION: (LIMIT 1/2 PAGE) Name of Firm:

Address of Home Office and Address of Branch Office if Applicable:

Telephone Number(s):

Fax Number(s):

Form of Business Organization (Corporation, Partnership, Individual, Joint Venture, Other):

Year Founded:

Primary individual to contact:

- ORGANIZATION: (LIMIT 1/2 PAGE)

1. How many years has your organization been in business in its current capacity?
2. How many years has your organization been in business under its present name? Under what other or former names has your organization operated?
3. If your organization is a corporation, answer the following: Date of incorporation, State of incorporation, President's name, Vice-President's name(s), Secretary's name, and Treasurer's name.
4. If your organization is a partnership, answer the following: Date of organization, type of partnership, if applicable, names of general partner(s).
5. If your organization is individually owned, answer the following: Date of organization, name of owner.
6. If the form of your organization is other than those listed above, describe it and name the principals.

- LICENSING: (LIMIT 1/2 PAGE)

1. List jurisdictions in which your organization is legally qualified to do business and indicate registration or license numbers, if applicable.
2. List jurisdictions in which your organization's partnership or trade name is filed.

- EXPERIENCE: (LIMIT 2 PAGES)

1. Describe your firm's experience with completing this scope of work for public entities, if any.
2. Provide a list of the public entities previously assisted with contact names and phones numbers.

- FEES:

1. Based on the scope of work outlined herein please describe your firm's full price associated with the completion of this work for the Network Upgrade Project (RFP# ErateNetwork27-28)

- COORDINATION OF INSTALLATION

1. The Contractor shall be responsible for securing all permits and approvals necessary to complete the work (if required).

ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. CONTRACT TERM

The term of the contract will begin when the school board approves, and a written contract is signed by both the district and the vendor/bidder selected. The term of the contract award will begin July 1, 2027. Initiation of the contract is dependent on E-Rate funding, in the event E-Rate does not fund the project then the contract will be null and void. In addition, a Funding Commitment Decision Letter (FCDL) does not guarantee the district will proceed with this project and may only be able to proceed with portions of the project on a per school campus basis.

2. CONTRACT/PURCHASE ORDER TERMINATION

The district shall reserve the right to terminate any contract/purchase order entered into as a result of the REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL at any time by giving thirty (30) days written notice of its intent to cancel. In the event the Proposer fails to carry out and comply with any of the conditions and agreements to be performed under the specifications, the district will notify the Proposer, in writing, of such failure or default. In the event the necessary corrective action has not been completed within a 10-day period, the Proposer must submit, in writing, why such corrective action has not been performed. The district reserves the right to determine whether or not such non-compliance may be construed as a failure of performance of the contract/purchase order.

3. LICENSING REQUIREMENTS

The successful Proposer must keep himself informed of, and adhere to, all laws and ordinances governing any matter related to work performed under the resulting contract/purchase order. The

successful Proposer will obtain all necessary licenses and permits and will be aware of all labor conditions and agreements relating to the work specified in this document and shall make all provisions necessary to avoid any disputes which might arise from those conditions and agreements and shall be responsible for any delays, damages or extra costs caused by disputes.

4. SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

It shall be the Proposer's responsibility to provide for the safety of workers and public in compliance with the requirements of insurance and public health and safety. The district requires all workers on-site to have a company badge. A list of workers with current photographs must be provided to the school district's Technology Department throughout the life cycle of the project(s) that require installation or services. The proposer must provide proof of employee background checks with submission documentation.

5. INDEMNIFICATION

The Proposer shall be responsible for all damage to persons or property that occurs as a result of his fault or negligence, or that of any of his employees, agents, or subcontractors. Proposer shall save and hold harmless the District and its School Board against any and all loss, cost, damage, claims, expense or liability in connection with the performance of the contract/purchase order. Any equipment or facilities damaged by the Proposer's operation shall be repaired and /or restored to their original condition, including cleaning and painting, at the Proposer's expense. The successful Proposer will assume the liability for all losses, damages (including loss of use), expenses, demands and claims in connection with or arising out of any injury or alleged injury to persons (including death), or damages or alleged damage to property, sustained or alleged to have been sustained in connection with or to have arisen out of the performance of the work by the Proposer, and his agents, and employees, including losses, expenses, or damages sustained by the District. The successful Proposer will undertake and agree to indemnify and hold harmless the district and its board, individually or collectively, and the officers, agents, and employees of the District and its Board, from any and all such losses, expenses, damages (including loss of use), and to pay all damages, judgments, costs and expenses, including attorney's fees in connection with said demands and claims resulting thereof. Any claims against the district must be filed within the State of Mississippi within the county of the district. The Proposer shall abide by the Federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations that apply to work performed under this Request. The Proposer shall defend, indemnify, and hold the district free and harmless against any and all claims, loss, liability and expense resulting from any alleged violation(s) of said regulation (s) including but not limited to, fines or penalties, judgments, court costs, and attorney's fees.

6. ATTORNEYS STATEMENT

In the event that the district employs attorneys or incurs other expenses that it may deem necessary to protect or endorse its rights under this contract/purchase order, the Proposer agrees to pay the attorney's fees and expenses incurred by the district. If either party defaults in the

performance of this agreement, the defaulting party shall pay the non-defaulting party responsible for the attorney's fees and court costs.

7. NEGOTIATIONS

The district reserves the right to have any additional terms and conditions incorporated into the agreement provided an authorized modification to the contract/purchase order is mutually agreed upon and duly executed by both parties.

8. ORDER OF PRECEDENCE

In the event of an inconsistency between the terms and conditions of the resulting contract/purchase order, the inconsistency shall be resolved by giving precedence in the following order: (1) The REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL, including the Scope of Work and Statement of Qualifications, and (2) Proposer Response.

9. PROJECT START DATE

The district reserves the right to start the project on or after July 1, 2027, even if the project has not yet received funding. All pricing proposed will be considered valid.

EXHIBIT E-1 (PROPOSER'S CONTRACT DOCUMENTS)

Proposer shall provide a contract for services to be offered. Proposer shall also provide a Service Level Agreement (SLA) to include resolution procedures, escalation process, and Proposer's response structure (tiered or other).

EXHIBIT E-2 (REFERENCES)

Reference List		
1	Company	Contact Name
	Phone Number	Fax Number
	E-Mail Address	Physical Address
	Scope of Work	
2	Company	Contact Name
	Phone Number	Fax Number
	E-Mail Address	Physical Address

	Scope of Work	
3	Company	Contact Name
	Phone Number	Fax Number
	E-Mail Address	Physical Address
	Scope of Work	

SPECIFIC EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS & DETAILS

Please Note: School building drawings/maps showing network MDF and IDFs and additional details will be provided at the walk-through along with additional equipment specification details if necessary.

The following technical requirements apply to RFP # ErateNetwork27-28. The District seeks Aruba CX 6300L or equivalent switches, Aruba-compatible supplemental access points, and network closet UPS units. Final models, quantities, capacities, and locations will be confirmed during the mandatory vendor walkthrough. Equivalent equipment must integrate with existing District infrastructure and management practices.

The awarded vendor will:

1. Supply, install, configure, and test Aruba CX 6300L or equivalent switches to replace designated aging Aruba switches. Include necessary uplink modules, transceivers, stacking components, licenses, and patching as applicable; migrate existing VLANs, uplinks, and switch configurations.

2. Supply and install supplemental Aruba-compatible access points at locations missed during the previous project. Reuse serviceable cabling where appropriate and provide new copper drops and mounting hardware where necessary.
3. Supply and install UPS units in designated network closets, sized for the connected network load and required runtime. Include necessary mounting, network management capability where specified, and manufacturer warranties.
4. Label installed switches, access points, UPS units, and new cabling; provide the Technology Department with a spreadsheet of equipment models, serial numbers, MAC addresses (where applicable), and installation locations.
5. Test connectivity, PoE operation, uplinks, wireless operation, and UPS functionality. Provide final configuration backups and installation documentation.
6. Label new copper drops with associated room or closet identification and use blue patch cables for new access point runs unless otherwise directed by the District.