McALLEN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
Request for Cooperative Quotes ("RFCQ") No. 2027-1027
E-Rate YR 2027 Internet Edge Equipment
Specifications and Scope of Work

1.0 BACKGROUND

McAllen Independent School District (the "District") is a multicultural community of nearly 20,000 students. The District is an inclusive community where all students are empowered to reach their full potential. The District covers thirty-three (33) square miles and employs approximately 3,300 staff. The District has thirty-one (31) campuses, including eighteen (18) elementary schools, six (6) middle schools, three (3) comprehensive high schools, and four (4) specialty campuses.

Officers of the District are:

Lucia Regalado, President
Robert J. Carreon, Vice-President
Roberto A. Haddad, Secretary
Erica de la Garza-Lopez, Trustee
Dr. Elizabeth Kittleman, Trustee
Sofia M. Peña, Trustee
Aaron D. Rivera, Trustee
Dr. René Gutiérrez, Superintendent

2.0 INTENT

It is the intent of the District, through this Request for Cooperative Quotes ("RFCQ"), to select respondent(s) ("Respondent"), offering the best value for E-Rate YR 2027 Internet Edge Equipment.

3.0 REQUIREMENTS

The Specifications and Scope of Work ("SOW") will take precedence over the General Terms and Conditions when they are in conflict. Please read the General Terms and Conditions and the following information carefully. Any exceptions to these General Terms and Conditions and SOW may cause a Respondent to be disqualified.

4.0 TERM AND TERMINATION OF AGREEMENT

4.1 The period of the contract ("Contract") resulting from this RFCQ may be for a term of one (1) year, beginning on April 1, 2027, and must adhere to ERATE rules of the funding year.

4.2 **Termination without Cause**. District shall have the right to terminate this contract without cause with thirty (30) days' written notice to the Respondent.

4.3 **Termination with Cause.**

4.3.1 **Termination by District.** District may terminate this Contract immediately upon the occurrence of any of the following events:

4.3.1.1 Any conduct of the Respondent, which jeopardizes the health, safety, or welfare of any person, or the safety, reputation, or the regular functions of the District.

4.3.1.2 Failure to provide evidence of liability insurance, as required.

4.3.1.3 Failure of Respondent to immediately bar any individual from performing services under this Contract, if such individual does not meet the qualifications required by this Contract or if such individual commits a material breach of one of the terms of this Contract.

4.3.1.4 In addition, if the Respondent commits a material breach of any of the terms of this Contract, other than those listed in subsections 4.3.1.1 through 4.3.1.3 above, District may terminate this Contract upon no less than thirty (30) days'

written notice.

4.4 Respondent shall not be entitled to lost profits or any further compensation not earned prior to the time of cancellation.

5.0 PRICING, INVOICING AND PAYMENT

The pricing offered through this RFCQ must remain firm for the term of the Contract. Price decreases and/or discount percentage in favor of the District are acceptable at any time throughout the term of the contract. In case of a price increase required due to market shortage or market change, documentation must be submitted for approval to Laura Williams, Director of Purchasing Services at laura.williams@mcallenisd.net.

6.0 RE-SOLICIT

The District has the right to reject all responses, re-solicit if only one response is received by the deadline, or to extend the **RFCQ response** deadline.

REFERENCES

7.0 Respondent shall furnish a minimum of three (3) different references from Texas K-12 public school districts for similar enterprise network hardware and turnkey integration projects. References must complete the "District Reference Form" (Refer to Attachments tab).

8.0 EVALUATION CRITERIA

In determining who will be awarded, the District shall consider:

8.1 the purchase price;
8.2 the reputation of the vendor and of the vendor's goods or services;
8.3 the quality of the vendor's goods or services;
8.4 the extent to which the goods or services meet the District's needs;
8.5 the vendor's past relationship with the District;
8.6 the impact on the ability of the District to comply with laws and rules relating to historically underutilized businesses in accordance with Texas Education Code 44.031(b)(6) or Small and Minority Firms, Women's Business Enterprises, Veteran-Owned Businesses, and Labor Surplus Area Firms in accordance with 2 CFR 200.321
8.7 for a contract for goods and services, other than goods and services related to telecommunications and information services, building construction and maintenance, or instructional materials, whether the vendor or the vendor's ultimate parent company or majority owner:
  8.7.1 has its principal place of business in this state; or
  8.7.2 employs at least 500 persons in this state; and

Refer to Attachment "A" for weights.

9.0 EVALUATION COMMITTEE.

The evaluation committee comprised of Lorena Garcia, Deputy Superintendent for Business & Operations; Domingo Ramos, Executive Director for Technology; Saul Diaz, Network Technology Coordinator; Laura Williams, Director of Purchasing Services; Elizabeth Cabrera, Coordinator for Purchasing Services; and Carol Quintanilla, Senior Buyer, will evaluate the RFCQ and recommend the successful vendor(s).

10.0 COMMUNICATION WITH DISTRICT PERSONNEL

From the date this solicitation is issued until a contract is awarded, all bids are rejected, or the solicitation is cancelled, respondents and their agents shall not discuss this RFCQ or communicate with any District employees or members of the Board of Trustees regarding this Project. Prohibited communication includes, but is not limited to, unsolicited literature, emails, text messages, faxes, or telephone calls.

10.1 Sole Point of Contact: Respondents may communicate only with members of the Purchasing Services team regarding matters related to this solicitation.

10.2 Questions: All inquiries must be submitted in writing via the "Questions" tab in the IonWave portal prior to the deadline stated.

10.3 Disqualification: Failure to abide by this non-contract requirement will result in automatic disqualification at the discretion of the District.

11.0 SCOPE OF WORK

11.1 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

11.1.1 The District intends to apply for Category 1 and Category 2 E-Rate funding for eligible internet edge equipment.

11.1.2 This RFCQ is seeking cooperative quotes for E-Rate YR 2027 Internet Edge Equipment (contingent to E-Rate funding). The District reserves the right to make the final award determination.

11.1.3 The project herein (including project execution and purchase order issuance) is contingent upon the approval of funding from the Universal Service Fund's Schools and Libraries Program, otherwise known as E-rate. Even after award of contract(s) and/or E-rate funding approval is obtained, the District may or may not proceed with the project, in whole or in part. Execution of the project, in whole or in part, is solely at the discretion of the District.

11.1.4 This is a federally funded purchase, and as such, Respondents are required to comply with all applicable federal guidelines, including 2 CFR 200.318-321; 200.324; 200.326-327 and Appendix II to CFR Part 200 (collectively "Procurement Regulations"). Respondents shall comply with the procurement standards and all applicable Federal, State, and local laws, executive orders, rules, and regulations, applicable to its performance under the Contract.

11.2 E-RATE REQUIREMENTS

11.2.1 Respondents must meet the following terms and conditions and all E-Rate requirements.

11.2.1.1 Respondents must have an understanding of the E-Rate program and E-Rate Category 1 and Category 2 requirements, specifically.

11.2.1.2 Respondents must be registered with the Universal Service Administrative Company ("USAC") and have a valid Service Provider Identification Number ("SPIN") issued by USAC (FCC Form 498) and include this information in their proposal response. The District will not consider any proposals without a valid

SPIN.

11.2.1.3 Respondent must be in good standing with the E-Rate program.

11.2.1.4 Respondent must certify compliance with Federal Communications Communication ("FCC") Lowest Corresponding Price rules pursuant to 47 CFR § 54.511(b).

11.2.1.5 Respondent must agree to comply with all other requirements of the Federal Universal Service Fund (E-rate) program. Any program violations as a result of the Respondent, and not the District's, will be the responsibility of the Respondent to resolve and the Respondent agrees to be solely responsible for any costs related to such violations.

11.2.1.6 The E-Rate program requires that all records be retained at least ten (10) years from the last date of service provided on a particular funding request. Respondent hereby agrees to retain all books, records, and other documents relative to any agreement resulting from this solicitation for ten (10) years after final payment.

11.3 CONTRACT

11.3.1 Awarded Respondent shall be required to execute a District Contract (refer to Attachments tab for Sample "Draft" Contract).

11.3.2 Contract(s) shall be dependent on the District's ability to secure funding through the Federal Universal Service Fund (E-rate) program.

11.4 INVOICE METHOD

11.4.1 Awarded Respondent shall file an FCC Form 474 (Service Provider Invoice (SPI) Form) to request direct E-Rate reimbursement from USAC for the discounted portion.

11.5 SCOPE OF SERVICES

11.5.1 Award shall be made to a single vendor that provides internet edge equipment through the E-Rate YR 2027 program.

11.5.2 Any product brand/model listed in the specifications and/or bid line items are intended as a standard of minimum specification requirements. Equals or products that exceed the minimum specification requirements will be considered.

11.5.3 Site Location

11.5.3.1 The proposed solution requires hardware deployment, physical installation, configuration, and turnkey services across two (2) primary District datacenter locations:

11.5.3.1.1 Datacenter 1: 4309 Warrior Drive, McAllen, TX 78501

11.5.3.1.2 Datacenter 2: 4001 N 23rd St., McAllen, TX 78504

11.5.4 Background

11.5.4.1 To maintain reliable, high-speed Internet access, robust security, and resilient enterprise transport across all campuses, the District requires an upgrade of its On-Premise Basic Terminating Equipment (OPBTE) and Core Network Switching at both District datacenters.

11.5.4.2 The District utilizes a leased dark fiber WAN handoff provided by the District's telecommunications provider, directly terminating into the Cisco Catalyst 8500 Secure Routers (C8570-G2) at Datacenter 1 (4309 Warrior Dr.) and Datacenter 2 (4001 N 23rd St.). The C8570-G2 routers and single-mode optical transceivers (QSFP-40G-LR4-S=) function as Category 1 On-Premise Basic Terminating Equipment (OPBTE) strictly required to light, terminate, and render functional the Category 1 broadband connection. Downstream equipment, including the Cisco Catalyst 9550 switches, local multimode patch optics (QSFP-40G-SR-

BD=), and internal core routing/switching functions, provide internal network distribution and resiliency under Category 2 Internal Connections.

11.5.5 Objective

11.5.5.1 The objective of this Request for Cooperative Quotes (RFCQ) is to select a qualified vendor to provide a comprehensive, turnkey solution for Category 1 On-Premise Basic Terminating Equipment (OPBTE) and Category 2 Internal Connections. The project scope includes:

11.5.5.1.1 Category 1 Hardware Procurement: Supplying two (2) enterprise-grade Cisco Catalyst 8500 Secure Routers (C8570-G2 or equal) equipped with 32GB DRAM, 480GB SSD storage, dual-feed power supplies, system licensing, 84-month Cisco Secure Routing Subscriptions or equal, Post-Quantum Cryptography (PQC) Ready, Live Protect (Zero-Reboot Vulnerability Shielding) and single-mode optical transceivers (QSFP-40G-LR4-S= or equal) strictly required to light, interface, and terminate the ISP leased dark fiber handoffs.

11.5.5.1.2 Category 2 Hardware Procurement: Supplying two (2) Cisco Catalyst 9550 Core Switches (C9550-24L4CD or equal) equipped with dual-feed power supplies, system licensing, 60-month Cisco Networking Subscriptions, Post-Quantum Cryptography (PQC) Ready, Live Protect (Zero-Reboot Vulnerability Shielding) and multi-mode optical transceivers (QSFP-40G-SR-BD= or equal) required for internal data center patching and core switching aggregation.

11.5.5.1.3 Support & Subscriptions: Providing 60-month 8x5xNBD hardware maintenance support and operational software subscriptions.

11.5.5.1.4 Turnkey Installation Services: Complete physical installation, dark fiber link turn-up, staging, core Border Gateway Protocol (BGP) routing and switching configuration, cutover migration, and post-deployment knowledge transfer.

11.5.6 Respondents MUST submit line-item itemized pricing that distinctly separates Category 1 On-Premise Basic Terminating Equipment (C8570-G2 (or equal) routers, single-mode dark fiber optics QSFP-40G-LR4-S= (or equal), and routing subscriptions) from Category 2 Internal Connections (C9550 or equal) core switches, internal multi-mode patch optics QSFP-40G-SR-BD=, switching subscriptions, and core switching functions). *Proposals submitted without explicit Category 1 vs. Category 2 line-item cost allocation will be deemed non-responsive*. **See all Bid line items for submission of itemized pricing**.

11.5.7 Certifications

11.5.7.1 Respondent must be a certified direct partner/reseller authorized by the equipment manufacturer (Cisco or offered equal). Upload Partner/Reseller authorization letter on Response Attachments tab.

11.5.7.2 Lead deployment engineers must hold current expert-level certifications (e.g., CCIE or equal) in enterprise routing and switching. Upload Lead Deployment Engineer Expert-Level certification on Response Attachments tab.

11.5.8 Project Guidelines

11.5.8.1 All hardware shipments must be delivered to the District Datacenter at 4309 Warrior Drive, McAllen, TX 78501.

11.5.8.2 Physical rack-mounting and staging may occur during normal business hours; however, final production cutovers must take place after 5:00 PM CST or on weekends.

11.5.8.3 Pre-configure routers and switches chassis, power supply modules, optics, and software images prior to onsite deployment.

11.5.8.4 Unpack, rackmount, connect to dual AC feeds, label, and clean-cable router and switch appliances at both datacenter locations. Vendor personnel are responsible for immediate cleanup and removal of all packing boxes, anti-static foam, and installation debris.

11.5.8.5 Network Configuration & Integration: Configure BGP peering sessions with District Internet Service Providers (ISPs). Configure inter-datacenter path resiliency, route redistribution, and High Availability (HA) failover mechanisms.

11.5.8.6 Perform cutover operations during an approved District maintenance window to prevent disruption to instructional hours.

11.5.8.7 Perform link integrity testing, bandwidth throughput verification, multi-homed BGP failover validation.

11.5.8.8 Provide post-installation knowledge transfer and documentation to District technical staff.

11.5.8.9 Installation and cut-over not to exceed ninety (90) days.

11.5.9 Project Completion

11.5.9.1 Project completion requires formal written acceptance signed by the Executive Director of Technology after successful execution and testing.

11.5.10 Warranties and other Requirements:

11.5.10.1 Minimum 5-year hardware replacement warranty coverage via manufacturer support subscription (SmartNet 8x5xNBD or equal).

11.5.10.2 On-site response time: within three (3) hours for outage related to installation/configuration.

11.5.11 Installation Warranty:

11.5.11.1 Awarded Respondent must provide a minimum one (1) year warranty covering all turnkey installation services, physical cabling, configuration stability, and turnkey turn-up labor from the date of final District sign-off.

12.0 AWARD INFORMATION

Award information will be available for download from our website within ninety (90) days of opening: https://mcallenisdtx.sites.thrillshare.com/page/awarded-vendors.

13.0 INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING A PROPOSAL

The District prefers and encourages Respondents to submit their response through Ionwave (https://mcallenisd.ionwave.net), however, we will accept submittals in a sealed envelope via mail or hand delivered. Email Carol Quintanilla, CTCD, Senior Buyer at carolina.quintanilla@mcallenisd.net for address and mailing instructions.