REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

for

Category 2 E-Rate Firewall Smartnet Services

for

Rapides Parish School System

RFP # 28-41A

RELEASE DATE: November 13, 2026

DUE DATE: December 11, 2026

11:00 A.M.

RAPIDES PARISH SCHOOL BOARD

POST OFFICE BOX 7117

ALEXANDRIA, LOUISIANA 71306

TELEPHONE (318) 487-0888

ADVERTISEMENT

The Rapides Parish School Board is seeking Request for Proposals from qualified proposers/contractors who can demonstrate their ability to provide Category 2 E-Rate Firewall Smartnet Services to the District and its schools. Proposers must be registered and qualified with the FCC to provide E-rate discounts where applicable.

Proposal information may be obtained by sending a request to purchasingdept@rpsb.us or from www.centralauctionhouse.com (fees may be associated with the use of this site).

Sealed proposals will be received by the Purchasing Department, in the Rapides Parish School Board Office, 619 Sixth Street, Alexandria, Louisiana, 71301, until 11:00 A.M., December 11, 2026. Proposals will be received until the stated date and time; late proposals arriving after the stated date and time will not be considered and will be returned unopened. Proposals **must** be in a sealed envelope and should be clearly marked with the proposer's name and "*RFP # 28-41A Category 2 E-Rate Firewall Smartnet Services*".

Any questions concerning the RFP must be addressed in writing via email to Kathy Baden at kathy.baden@rpsb.us.

Publication Dates: November 13, 2026
November 20, 2026
November 27, 2026

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)
Category 2 E-Rate Firewall Smartnet Services

SECTION ONE
INSTRUCTIONS TO PROPOSERS

1.1 - INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

The Rapides Parish School Board (RPSB) is a comprehensive, multi-site public elementary and secondary educational school district. The district is comprised of 55 schools/facilities and is dedicated to providing strong educational opportunities to the youth of Rapides Parish. As such, the requirements of its information technology and communications are vast and critical in terms of quality, reliability and ease of operation. This invitation requires an enterprise-wide business partner(s) for the requested services to submit a plan to the Rapides Parish School System for installation, implementation, use, maintenance, and future capability of such systems.

Currently, all school Local Area Networks (LANs) are connected to a centralized location. Current Internet bandwidth is 20Gbps.

1.1.1 - MANAGEMENT

Rapides Parish School System seeks to maximize cost savings and minimize related costs by the standardization and streamlining of services and tasks relating to those services requested in this RFP. The intent of the RFP is to obtain competitive proposals from qualified proposers/contractors who can demonstrate their ability to provide technology materials and supplies for Rapides Parish School System as outlined in this RFP.

1.1.2 – REQUESTED SERVICES

This RFP is being issued by the RPSB to invite qualified E-rate vendors to submit proposals for Firewall Smartnet Services. All equipment and hardware costs should include the cost of any licenses associated with the device. All installation and configuration of these network components will be performed by the Rapides Parish School Board and should not be included in any costs associated with this RFP.

RPSB would prefer a turnkey solution where all equipment or hardware (any other goods and services necessary to accomplish the scope of the project) can be provided by the proposer. However, RPSB reserves the right to choose one or more vendors to provide the equipment and hardware listed in the RFP. RPSB further reserves the right to accept vendor proposals in whole or in part, therefore having the flexibility to select equipment and hardware that best meet the needs of the RPSB. If your proposal does not allow for selection of a subset of line items or minor variations in the quantities required, please clearly indicate these limitations. Vendors may respond to all or part of the RFP. Responses should separate out each part.

1.1.3 – OTHER SERVICES AND PARTNERS

The school system seeks through this partnership, a proposer/contractor that can demonstrate benchmark experience in the field of education to bring proactive ideas and solutions to the Rapides Parish School System. Describe, in detail, solutions offered by the proposer/contractor that would enable Rapides Parish School System to offer a state-of –the-art environment for the students, staff and administration.

1.2 - DEFINITIONS

A. Shall, will, must – The term shall denotes mandatory requirements.
B. May–The term “may” denotes an advisory or permissible action.
C. Should–The term “should” denotes desirable.
D. Contractor–Any person having a contract with a public entity; Proposer
E. System, Owner, District, Board, RPSB, public entity - Rapides Parish School District
F. Discussions – For the purpose of this RFP, presentations, a formal, structured means of conducting written or oral communications/presentations with responsible proposers who submit proposals in response to this RFP.

G. RFP–Request for Proposal

1.3 - SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

	Date
1. RFP released to prospective proposers	November 13, 2026
2. Deadline to receive written inquiries	November 30, 2026, 4:00 p.m.
3. Deadline to answer written inquiries	December 2, 2026, 4:00 p.m.
4. RFP/Proposal due date	December 11, 2025, 11:00 a.m.
5. Recommendation to Board for Award (estimate)	January 5, 2027
6. Service begins	Upon Receipt of the Funding Commitment Decision Letter

Note: In order to visit schools in Rapides Parish, Proposer must obtain a visitor's card from Mr. Clyde Washington, Executive Assistant Superintendent of Administration, Rapides Parish School Board, 619 Sixth St., Alexandria, Louisiana, 71301, Telephone: 318-487-0888.

Proposers must submit a valid email address to RPSB. All answers to written inquiries will be by addenda only. Submit email addresses to kathy.baden@rpsb.us.

NOTE: The Rapides Parish School Board reserves the right to deviate from these dates and times with sufficient notification to proposers.

1.4 – PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL

The RFP may be obtained by emailing your request to purchasingdept@rpsb.us or by visiting https://www.centralauctionhouse.com; fees may be associated with the use of this site.

All proposals shall be sealed and received by the Purchasing Department no later than the date and time shown in the Schedule of Events.

IMPORTANT – The outside of any and all envelopes, boxes or packages should be clearly marked with the following information and format:

PROPOSER'S NAME
PROPOSAL NAME *(RFP NO.: 28-41A Category 2 E-Rate Firewall Smartnet Services)*

Proposals may be mailed or hand delivered to:

Purchasing Department
Rapides Parish School Board
619 6th Street
Alexandria LA 71301

Proposer is solely responsible for ensuring that its courier provider makes inside deliveries to our physical location. RPSB is not responsible for any delays caused by the proposer's chosen means of proposal delivery.

Proposer is solely responsible for the timely delivery of its proposal. Failure to meet the proposal due date and time shall result in rejection of your proposal.

PROPOSALS SHALL BE OPENED PUBLICLY AND ONLY PROPOSERS SUBMITTING PROPOSALS SHALL BE IDENTIFIED ALOUD. PRICES SHALL NOT BE READ. AWARD MAY BE MADE BY THE BOARD AT A LATER MEETING.

1.5 PROPOSAL RESPONSE FORMAT

Proposals submitted for consideration should follow the format and order of presentation described below:

A. **Cover Letter:** Containing summary of Proposers ability to perform the services described in the RFP and confirm that Proposer is willing to provide equipment/hardware and enter into a contract with Rapides Parish School Board. Proposer must also include a statement certifying that the vendor is submitting the lowest corresponding price (LCP) as per E-Rate guidelines—"As an authorized representative of <insert company name>, I certify that I am submitting the lowest corresponding price as per E-Rate guidelines for the goods

and/or services being proposed to the Rapides Parish School Board." By signing the letter and/or the proposal, the Proposer certifies compliance with the signature authority in accordance with R.S. 38:2212. The person signing must be:

1. A current corporate officer, partnership member, or other individual specifically authorized to submit a proposal as reflected in the appropriate records on file with the Secretary of State; or
2. An individual authorized to bind the company as reflected by a corporate resolution, certificate of affidavit; or
3. Other documents indicating authority, which are acceptable to this public entity.

B. **Table of Contents:** Organized in the order cited in the format contained herein.

C. **Proposer Qualifications and Experience:** History and background of Proposer, financial strength and stability, with related services to educational entities, existing customer satisfaction, demonstrated volume of merchants, etc.

D. **Required Documents:** Required Documents which includes the following:

- A copy of the Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN) filed with the Schools and Libraries Division (SLD)
- A copy of the Service Provider Annual Certification (SPAC) (Form 473) filed with the SLD
- A copy of the vendor's Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Registration Number
- A copy of the vendor's Louisiana State Contract Number, if applicable
- A copy of the document that states your company has proof of authority to do business in the State of Louisiana (Secretary of State)
- At least five (3) references for which your company provided goods and/or services of a similar nature. A minimum of two (2) references should be from schools/school districts in Louisiana. Provide the company/school district name, contact name, title, email address, and phone number of the individual at each reference site whom we can contact for information. Inform your references that we may be contacting them to discuss your performance.
- A list or organizational chart of the management, sales, and local service support

E. **Technical Proposal:** Illustrating technical details of the proposed solution and describing compliance with the RFP requirements.

F. **Innovative Concepts:** Present innovative concepts, if any, not discussed above for consideration.

G. **Project Schedule:** Detailed schedule of implementation plan. This schedule is to include implementation actions, timelines, responsible parties, etc.

H. **Financial Proposal:** Proposer's fees and other costs, if any, shall be submitted. This financial proposal shall include any and all costs the Proposer/Contractor wishes to have considered in the contractual agreement. Pricing must include all elements of the proposed service. Proposer must include cost to purchase an additional unit of proposed equipment. Address hardware, software, hardware and software installation, licensing, configuration, cabling, training, maintenance, labor, permits, documentation, and any other product and/or services must be included in this cost to be considered by the RPSB. "Hidden charges," charges stated by the vendor in any other section of this proposal, will not be considered as part of the proposal. Vendors can submit multiple proposals outlining different options for consideration. A best and final offer may be requested from some or all vendors. **Vendors cannot charge E-Rate applicants a price above the Lowest Corresponding Price (LCP) for E-Rate program services** (47 CFR Section 54.511(b)). LCP is defined as the lowest price that a service provider charges to nonresidential customers who are similarly situated to a particular E-Rate applicant (school, library, or consortium) for similar services. Proposers are urged to review the details of the LCP requirement at http://www.usac.org/sl/service-providers/step02/lowest-corresponding-price.aspx.

1.5.1 NUMBER OF RESPONSE COPIES

Each Proposer shall submit one signed original response and four additional copies.

1.5.2 LEGIBILITY/CLARITY

Responses to the requirements of this RFP in the formats requested is desirable with all questions answered in as much detail as practicable. The Proposer's response is to demonstrate an understanding of the requirements. Proposals prepared simply and economically, providing straightforward, concise description of the Proposer's

ability to meet the requirements of the RFP are also desired. Each Proposer is solely responsible for the accuracy and completeness of its proposal.

1.6 CONFIDENTIALITY

Only information that is in the nature of legitimate trade secrets or non-published financial data may be deemed proprietary or confidential. Any material within a proposal identified as such must be clearly marked in the proposal and will be handled in accordance with Louisiana Public Records Act. R.S. 44 and applicable rules and regulations. However, Rapides Parish School Board reserves the right to make any proposal, including proprietary information contained therein, available to Board members, personnel or their representatives for the sole purpose of assisting RPSB in its evaluation of the proposal. RPSB shall require said individuals to protect the confidentiality of any specifically identified proprietary information or privileged business information obtained as a result of their participation in these evaluations.

1.7 PROPOSAL CLARIFICATIONS PRIOR TO SUBMITTAL

There will be no pre-proposal conference. All questions/inquiries should be made in writing via email to Kathy Baden, Purchasing Agent at kathy.baden@rpsb.us. Responses will be made via email.

1.7.1 INQUIRY PERIODS

An initial inquiry period is hereby firmly set for all interested proposers to perform a detailed review of the RFP documents and to submit any written questions relative thereto. Without exception, all questions MUST be in writing (even if an answer has already been given to an oral question during any Pre-proposal Conference or in any public meetings called in the development stages of this RFP) and received by the close of business on the Inquiry Deadline date set forth in the Schedule of Events. Initial inquiries shall not be entertained thereafter.

RPSB shall not and cannot permit an open-ended inquiry period, as this creates an unwarranted delay in the RFP submittal cycle. RPSB reasonably expects and requires responsible and interested proposers to conduct their in-depth proposal review and submit inquires in a timely manner.

Further, we realize the additional questions or requests for clarification may generate from RPSB's addendum responses to inquiries received during the initial inquiry period. Therefore, a final 2-day inquiry period may be granted if such inquiries warrant clarification. Questions relative to the addendum shall be submitted by the close of business two (2) working days from the date the addendum is furnished to the proposer. If necessary, another addendum will be issued to address the final questions received. Thereafter, all proposal documents, including but not limited to the specifications, terms, conditions, plans, etc., will stand as written and/or amended by any addendum issued as a result of the final inquiry period.

No negotiations, decisions, or actions shall be executed by any proposer as a result of any oral discussions with any RPSB employee or representative. RPSB shall only consider written and timely communications from proposers.

Inquiries shall be submitted in writing by email by an authorized representative of the proposer, clearly cross-referenced to the relevant solicitation section. Only those inquiries received by the established deadline shall be considered by RPSB. Answers to questions that change or substantially clarify the solicitation shall be issued by addendum and provided to all prospective proposers.

Written inquiries concerning this solicitation may be sent by e-mail to: Kathy Baden, Purchasing Agent, kathy.baden@rpsb.us

1.8 ERRORS OR OMISSIONS IN PROPOSAL

RPSB will not be liable for any error in the proposal. Proposer will not be allowed to alter proposal documents after the deadline for proposal submission, except under the following condition: RPSB reserves the right to make corrections or clarifications due to patent errors identified in the proposals by RPSB or the Proposer. RPSB, at its option, has the right to request clarification or additional information from the Proposer.

1.9 CHANGES, ADDENDA, WITHDRAWALS

RPSB reserves the right to change the "Schedule of Events" or issue addenda to the RFP at any time. RPSB also reserves the right to cancel any part of or the entire RFP, or reissue the RFP.

If the proposer needs to submit changes or addenda, such shall be submitted in writing, signed by an authorized representative of the proposer, cross-referenced clearly to the relevant proposal section, in a sealed envelope, prior to the proposal opening. Such shall meet all requirements for the proposal.

1.10 WITHDRAWAL OF PROPOSAL
A proposer may withdraw a proposal that has been submitted at any time up to the proposal closing date and time. To accomplish this, a written request signed by the authorized representative of the proposer must be submitted to the RFP Coordinator (Kathy Baden).

1.11 MATERIAL IN THE RFP
Proposal shall be based only on material contained in the RFP. The RFP includes official responses to questions, addenda, and other material, which may be provided by RPSB pursuant to the RFP.

1.12 WAIVER OF ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMALITIES
As provided by law, RPSB reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to waive administrative informalities contained in any proposal.

1.13 PROPOSAL REJECTION
Issuance of this RFP in no way constitutes a commitment by RPSB to award a contract. RPSB reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals submitted. RPSB reserves the right to consider both the responses to this RFP and any other legitimate purchasing options outside of this RFP for services such as, but not limited to, Louisiana state purchasing contract.

1.14 OWNERSHIP OF PROPOSAL
All materials (paper content only) submitted in response to this request shall become the property of RPSB. Selection or rejection of a response does not affect this right. All proposals submitted will be retained by RPSB and not returned to proposers. Any copyrighted materials in the response are not transferred to RPSB.

1.15 COST OF PREPARATION
RPSB is not liable for any costs incurred by prospective Proposers or Contractors prior to issuance of or entering into a contract. Costs associated with developing the proposal, preparing for oral presentations, and any other expenses incurred by the Proposer in responding to the RFP are entirely the responsibility of the Proposer, and shall not be reimbursed in any manner by RPSB.

1.16 NON-NEGOTIABLE CONTRACT TERMS
Non –negotiable contract terms include but are not limited to taxes, assignment of contract, audit of records, EEOC and ADA compliance, record retention, content of contract/order of precedence, contract changes, governing law, claims or controversies, and termination based on contingency of available funds.

1.17 TAXES
Any taxes, other than state and local sales and use taxes, from which RPSB is exempt, shall be assumed to be included within the Proposer's cost.

1.18 PROPOSAL VALIDITY
All proposals shall be considered valid for acceptance until such time an award is made by the Board, unless the Proposer provides for a different time period within its proposal response. However, RPSB reserves the right to reject a proposal if the Proposer's response is unacceptable and the Proposer is unwilling to extend the validity of its proposal.

1.19 PRIME CONTRACTOR/PROPOSER RESPONSIBILITIES
The selected Proposer(s) shall be required to assume responsibility for all items and services offered in its proposal whether or not it produces or provides them. RPSB shall consider the selected Proposer to be the sole point of contract with regards to contractual matters, including payment of any and all charges resulting from the contract.

1.20 USE OF SUBCONTRACTORS

Each Contractor shall serve as the single prime contractor for all work performed pursuant to its contract. That prime contractor shall be responsible for all deliverables referenced in this RFP.

1.21 WRITTEN OR ORAL DISCUSSIONS/PRESENTATION

Written or oral discussions may be conducted with Proposers who submit proposals determined to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for award. RPSB reserves the right to enter into an agreement without further discussion of the proposal submitted based on the initial offers received. Any commitments or representations made during these discussions, if conducted, may become formally recorded in the final contract
Written or oral discussions/presentations for clarification may be conducted to enhance RPSB's understanding of any or all of the proposals submitted. Neither negotiations nor changes to proposer/contractor proposals will be allowed during these discussions. Proposals may be accepted without such discussions.

1.22 ACCEPTANCE OF PROPOSAL CONTENT

The mandatory RFP requirements shall become contractual obligations if a contract ensues. Failure of the successful Proposer to accept these obligations shall result in the rejection of the proposal.

1.23 CANCELLATION OF RFP OR REJECTION OF PROPOSALS

RPSB reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received in response to this RFP, or to cancel this RFP if it is in the best interest of RPSB to do so. The Rapides Parish School Board reserves the right to award all, none or portions of any proposal that it deems most appropriate for its needs, and to waive any all informalities and technicalities. RPSB's main goal is to provide reasonably priced services (NOT NECESSARILY THE LOWEST PRICE) that are in the best interest of RPSB. OPTIONAL OR ADDITIONAL SERVICES, NOT REQUESTED, AS LISTED BY THE VENDOR MAY BE CONSIDERED IN EVALUATION OF A FINAL AWARD. THOUGH PRICE IS THE MAJOR FACTOR IN PROPOSAL EVALUATION, RPSB IS NOT OBLIGATED TO ACCEPT THE LOWEST PROPOSAL. Should E-Rate discounts not be pursued or approved for any service requested in this RFP, then RPSB reserves the right to consider both the responses to this RFP and any other legitimate purchasing options outside of this RFP such as, but not limited to, Louisiana state purchasing contract for those services.

1.24 EVALUATION AND SELECTION

All responses received as a result of this RFP are subject to evaluation by an Evaluation Committee for the purpose of selecting the Proposer with whom RPSB shall contract.

To evaluate all proposals, a committee whose members have expertise in various areas has/will been/be selected. This committee will determine which proposals are reasonably susceptible of being selected for award. If required, written or oral discussions may be conducted with any or all of the Proposers to make this determination.

Written recommendation of award shall be made to the Board for the Proposer(s) whose proposal, conforming to the RFP, will be the most advantageous to Rapides Parish School Board, price and other factors considered. The criteria for selection will be applied and interpreted solely at the discretion of RPSB. Proposals should include all necessary information that is pertinent to these evaluation criteria. RPSB will not refund or pay for any cost incurred prior to the award of the contract between the RPSB and the successful vendor. The committee may reject any or all proposals if none are considered in the best interest of RPSB.

Any existing Louisiana state purchasing contract covering requested services may be considered as a response to this RFP without formal response from the vendor(s) and may be evaluated along with any formal response to this RFP.

1.25 CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

If for any reason the Proposer whose proposal is most responsive to RPSB's needs, price and other evaluation factors set forth in the RFP considered, does not agree to a contract, that proposal shall be rejected and RPSB may negotiate with the next most responsive Proposer. Negotiation may include revision of non-mandatory

terms, conditions, and requirements. RPSB must approve the final contract form and issue purchase order(s), if applicable, to complete the process. Oral presentations may be required at the Committee Level and again at a meeting of the full Board. Any costs associate with said presentation shall be the sole responsibility of the proposer.

1.26 CONTRACT AWARD AND EXECUTION

RPSB reserves the right to enter into an agreement without further discussion of the proposal submitted based on the initial offers received. Contracts based on this RFP may be awarded on an annual, multi-year, renewable term, voluntary extension, month-to-month, or other basis. These may include, but are not limited to: wide-area network services and/or Internet services. Awarding of multi-year contracts must meet all state and local regulations/laws pertaining to school districts entering into multi-year contracts. The RFP, and addendums, the proposal of the selected Contractor will become part of any contract initiated by RPSB.

In no event is a proposer to submit its own standard contract terms and conditions as a response to this RFP. The proposer needs to address the specific language in the sample contract and submit with their proposal any exceptions or exact contract deviations that their firm wishes to negotiate. The terms for both of these documents may be negotiated as part of the negotiation process with the exception of contract provisions that are non-negotiable.

1.27 RECOMMENDATION OF AWARD

The recommended proposal(s) will be presented to the Rapides Parish School Board for approval or rejection. If approved, a contract shall be completed and signed by all parties concerned on or before the date indicated in the Schedule of Events. If this date is not met, through no fault of RPSB, RPSB may elect to make award to the next most advantageous Proposer. All proposers will be notified of the outcome of the evaluation process.

1.28 DEBRIEFINGS

Debriefings may be scheduled by the participating proposers by scheduling an appointment with the Chief Financial Officer, RPSB at the address, phone number, e-mail address, etc. listed herein.

1.29 INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

Insurance Requirements for Contractors

Contractor shall procure and maintain for the duration of the contract insurance against claims for injuries to persons or damages to property, which may arise from or in connection with the performance of the work hereunder by the Contractor, his agents, representatives or employees. The cost of such insurance shall be included in the proposer's proposal. Certificate of Coverages shall be received and approved by RPSB before work commences.

Minimum Scope of Insurance

Coverage shall be at least as broad as:
Insurance Services Office form number GL 0002 (Ed. 1/73) covering Comprehensive General Liability and Insurance Services Office form number GL 0404 covering Broad Form Comprehensive General Liability; or Insurance Services Office Commercial General Liability coverage ("occurrence" form CG 0001). "Claims Made" form is unacceptable. The "occurrence form" shall not have a "sunset clause".

A. Insurance Services Office form number CA 0001 (Ed. 1/78) covering Automobile Liability, code 1 "any auto" and endorsement CA 0025, or current CA 0001 12/90, code 1 "any auto". Workers' Compensation insurance as required by the Labor Code of the State of Louisiana, including Employers Liability insurance.
B. Minimum Limits of Insurance - Contractor shall maintain limits no less than:
    1. Commercial General Liability: $1,000,000 for projects up to $1,000,000 and $3,000,000 for projects over $1,000,000 combined single limit per occurrence for bodily injury, and property damage. The aggregate loss limit applies to each project, or a copy of ISO form CG 2503 (Edition 1185) shall be submitted.
    2. Automobile Liability: $300,000 combined single limit per accident, for bodily injury and property damage.
    3. Workers Compensation and Employers Liability: Workers' Compensation limits as required by the Labor Code of the State of Louisiana and Statutory Employers Liability limits. Exception: Employers liability

limit is to be $1,000,000 when work is to be over water and involves maritime exposure.

C. Deductibles and Self-Insured Retentions - Any deductibles or self-insured retentions must be declared to and approved by RPSB. At the option of RPSB, the insurer shall reduce or eliminate such deductibles or self-insured retentions as respects the Board, its officers, officials, employees and volunteers; or the contractor shall procure a bond guaranteeing payment of losses and related investigating, claim administration and defense expenses.

D. Other Insurance Provisions - The policies are to contain, or be endorsed to contain, the following provisions:
   General Liability and Automobile Liability Coverage
   1. The Public Entity, its officers, officials, employees, Boards and Commissions and volunteers are to be added as "additional insureds" as respects liability arising out of activities performed by or on behalf of the contractor; products and completed operations of the contractor, premises owned, occupied or used by the contractor, only to the extent of damages directly caused by the negligence of the contractor. It is understood that the business auto policy under "Who is an Insured" automatically provides liability coverage in favor of the Board.
   2. The contractor insurance coverage shall be primary insurance as respects the Board, its officers, officials, employees and volunteers. Any insurance or self-insurance maintained by the Board, its officers, officials, employees or volunteers with respect to liability arising out of operations performed for them by or on behalf of the contractor, but only to the extent of damage directly caused by the negligence of the contractor, shall be excess of the contractor's insurance and shall not contribute with it.
   3. Any failure to comply with reporting provisions of the policy shall not affect coverage provided to the Public Entity, its officers, officials, employees, Boards and Commissions or volunteers.
   4. The contractor's insurance shall apply separately to each insured against whom claim is made or suit is brought, except with respect to the limits of the insurer's liability.

   Workers' Compensation and Employers Liability Coverage

   The insurer shall agree to waive all rights of subrogation against the Board, its officers, officials, employees and volunteers for losses arising from work performed by the contractor for the Board.

E. All Coverage - Each insurance policy required by this clause shall be endorsed to state that coverage shall not be suspended, voided, canceled by either party, reduced in coverage or in limits except after thirty (30) day's prior written notice by certified mail, return receipt requested, has been given to Rapides Parish School Board.

F. Acceptability of Insurers - Insurance is to be placed with insurers with a Best's rating of no less than “A”. This requirement will be waived for workers' compensation coverage only for those contractors whose workers' compensation coverage is placed with companies who participate in the State of Louisiana Workers' Compensation Assigned Risk Pool or the Louisiana Workers Compensation Corporation.

G. Verification of Coverage - Contractor shall furnish RPSB with Certificates of Insurance affecting coverage required by this clause. The certificates for each insurance policy are to be signed by a person authorized by that insurer to bind coverage on its behalf. The certificates are to be on forms as specified herein and are to be received and approved by RPSB before work commences. The Agency reserves the right to require complete, certified copies of all required insurance policies, at any time.

1.30 INDEMNIFICATION AND LIMIT OF LIABILITY

Neither party shall be liable for any delay or failure in the performance beyond its control resulting from acts of God or force majeure. The parties shall use reasonable efforts to eliminate or minimize the effect of such events upon performance of their respective duties under this agreement.

Contractor shall be fully liable for the actions of its agents, employees, partners or subcontractors and shall fully indemnify and hold harmless RPSB from suits, actions, damages and costs of every name and description relating to personal injury and damage to real or personal tangible property caused by Contractor, its agents, employees, partners or subcontractors in the performance of this contract, without limitation provided, however that the Contractor shall not indemnify for that portion of any claim, loss or damage arising hereunder due to the negligent act or failure to act of RPSB.

Contractor will indemnify, defend and hold RPSB harmless, without limitation, from and against any and all damages, expenses (including reasonable attorney’s fees), claims, judgments, liabilities, and costs which may be

finally assessed against RPSB in any action for infringement of a United States Letter Patent with respects to the products, materials, or services furnished, or of any copyright, trademark, trade secret or intellectual property right, provided that RPSB shall give the Contractor: 1) prompt written notice of any action, claim or threat of infringement suit, or other suit; 2) the opportunity to take over, settle or defend such action, claim or suit at Contractor's sole expense; 3) assistance in the defense of any such action at the expense of the Contractor. Where a dispute or claim arises relative to a real or anticipated infringement, RPSB may require Contractor, at its sole expense, to submit such information and documentation, including formal patent attorney opinions, as RPSB shall require.

In addition to the foregoing, if the use of any item(s) or part(s) thereof shall be enjoined for any reason or if Contractor believes that it may be enjoined, Contractor shall have the right, at its own expense and sole discretion as RPSB's exclusive remedy to take action in the following order of precedence: 1) to procure for RPSB the right to continue using the item(s) or part(s) thereof, as applicable; 2) to modify the component so that it becomes non-infringing equipment of at least equal quality and performance; 3) to replace said item(s) or part(s) thereof, as applicable, with non-infringing components of at least equal quality and performance; 4) if none of the foregoing is commercially reasonable, then provide monetary compensation to RPSB up to the dollar amount of the Contract.

For all other claims against the Contractor where liability is not otherwise set forth in the agreement as being "without limitation", and regardless of the basis on which the claim is made, Contractor's liability for direct damages, shall be the greater of $100,000, the dollar amount of the Contract, or two (2) times the charge for products, materials, or services rendered by the Contractor under the Contract. Unless otherwise specifically enumerated herein mutually agreed between parties, neither party shall be liable to the other for special, indirect or consequential damages, including lost data or records (unless the Contractor is required to back-up the data or records as part of the work plan), even if the party shall be liable for lost profits, lost revenue or lost institutional operating savings.

RPSB may, in addition to other remedies available to them at law or equity and upon notice to the Contractor, retain such monies from amounts due Contractor, or may proceed against the performance and payment bond, if any, as may be necessary to satisfy any claim for damages, penalties, costs and the like asserted by or against them.

1.31 PAYMENT FOR SERVICES

RPSB will pay contractor once per month (or on any other schedule contractually agreed upon) upon presentation of the required detailed invoice. The Contractor may invoice monthly by forwarding invoices to the following billing address:

Rapides Parish School Board
Attn: ACCOUNTS PAYABLE
P O Box 7117
Alexandria LA 71306

Payments will be made within approximately thirty (30) days after receipt of a properly executed invoice, and approval by the Contract Administrator. Invoices shall include the contract and purchase order number, using school or facility and any other identifier. Invoices submitted without the referenced documentation will not be approved for payment until the required information is provided.

1.32 TERMINATION

1.32.1 TERMINATION OF THIS AGREEMENT FOR CAUSE

RPSB may terminate this agreement for cause based upon failure of Contractor to comply with the terms and/or conditions of the agreement, or failure to fulfill its performance obligations pursuant to this agreement, provided that RPSB shall give the Contractor written notice specifying the Contractor's failure. If within thirty (30) days after receipt of such notice, the Contractor shall not have corrected such failure or, in the case of failure which cannot be corrected in thirty (30) days, begun in good faith to correct such failure and thereafter proceeded diligently to complete such correction, then RPSB may, at its option, place the Contractor in default and the agreement shall terminate on the date specified in such notice.

The Contractor may exercise any rights available to it under Louisiana law to terminate for cause upon the failure of RPSB to comply with the terms and conditions of this agreement, provided that the Contractor shall give RPSB written notice specifying RPSB's failure and a reasonable opportunity for RPSB to cure the defect.

1.32.2 TERMINATION OF AGREEMENT AND/OR REDUCTION OF LEVELS OF SERVICE FOR BUDGETARY REASONS:

RPSB is required by statute not to deficit spend. RPSB depends upon State Funding for a large part of its budget based upon student count. If within thirty (30) days of receipt of notice from the State of Louisiana, RPSB determines that it will have insufficient funds to maintain the level or type of service per this agreement, RPSB may reduce said level or type of service to any amount that it deems necessary.
In the event RPSB reduces the type or level of service to less than an amount proposer/contractor deems acceptable (must be less than the original level of service) then proposer/contractor may cancel this contract upon ninety (90) days written notice to RPSB.

1.32.3 CONTINUANCE

The continuance of this contract is contingent upon the appropriation of funds to fulfill the requirements of the contract by state federal, state, and local governments. If the federal government, state and/or local government fails to appropriate sufficient monies to provide for the continuation of the contract, or if any such appropriation is reduced by any means to prevent the total appropriation for the year from exceeding revenues from that year, or for any other lawful purpose, and the effect of such reduction is to provide insufficient monies for the continuation of the contract shall terminate on the date of the beginning of the first fiscal year for which funds are not appropriated.

1.33 ASSIGNMENT

Assignment of contract, or any payment under the contract, requires the advance written approval of the Contract Administrator.

1.34 AUDIT OF RECORDS

The State legislative auditor, federal auditors, private contracted auditors and internal auditor(s) of RPSB shall have the option to audit all accounts directly pertaining to the resulting contract for a period of five (5) years after project acceptance or as required by applicable State and Federal law.

1.35 CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLIANCE

The Contractor agrees to abide by the requirements of the following as applicable; Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Equal Opportunity Act of 1972, Federal Executive Order 11246, The Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, The Vietnam Era Veteran's Readjustment Assistance act of 1974, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, The Age Act of 1975, and the Contractor agrees to abide by the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Contractor agrees not to discriminate in its employment practices, and will render services under this agreement and any contract entered into as a result of this agreement, without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, veteran status, political affiliation, or disabilities. Any act of discrimination committed by the Contractor, or failure to comply with these statutory obligations when applicable shall be grounds for termination of this agreement and any contract entered into as a result of this agreement.

1.36 RECORD RETENTION

The Contractor shall maintain all records in relation to this contract for a period of at least ten (10) years.

1.40 RECORD OWNERSHIP

All records, reports, documents, or other material related to any contact resulting from this RFP and/or obtained or prepared by the Contractor in connection with the performance of the services contracted for herein shall become the property of RPSB, and shall, upon request, be returned by the Contractor to RPSB, at Contractor's expense, at termination or expiration of this contract.

1.41 CONTENT OF CONTRACT / ORDER OF PRECEDENCE

In the event of an inconsistency between the contract, the RFP and/or the Contractor's Proposal, the

inconsistency shall be resolved by giving precedence first to the final contract, then to the RFP and subsequent addenda (if any) and finally the Contractor's Proposal.

1.42 CONTRACT CHANGES

No additional changes, enhancements, or modification to any contract resulting from this RFP shall be made without the prior approval of the Contract Administrator of RPSB. Changes to the contract include any change in; compensation, beginning/ending date of the contract, scope of work, service levels, and/or Contractor change through the Assignment of Contract process. Any such changes, once approved, will result in the issuance of an amendment to the contract.

1.43 SUBSTITUTION OF PERSONNEL

RPSB intends to include in any contract resulting from this RFP the following condition: If during the term of the contract, the Contractor cannot provide the quality of service personnel as proposed and RPSB requests a substitution that substitution shall meet or exceed the requirements stated herein. A detailed resume of qualifications and justification is to be submitted to RPSB for approval prior to any personnel substitution. It shall be acknowledged by the Contractor that every reasonable attempt shall be made to assign quality, qualified personnel with background clearance to provide service in RPSB facilities.

1.44 GOVERNING LAW

All activities associated with this RFP shall be interpreted under Louisiana law. All proposals and contracts submitted are subject to board policy, the provisions of the laws of the State of Louisiana, The Public Bid Law, standard terms and conditions, special terms and conditions and specification listed in this RFP.

1.45 CLAIMS OR CONTROVERSIES

Any claim or controversy shall be resolve in accordance with this RFP and R.S. 38:2211 – 2214.

1.46 BIDDER'S CERTIFICATION OF OMB A-133 COMPLIANCE

Certification of no suspension or debarment. By signing and submitting any proposal for $100, 000 or more, the proposer certifies that their company or principals are not suspended or debarred by the General Services Administration (GSA) in accordance with the requirements in OMB Circular A-133. A list of parties who have been suspended or debarred can be viewed via the internet at www.arnet.gov/epls.

1.47 NATIONAL DEFENCE AUTHORIZATION ACT (NDAA)

In accordance with LA R.S. 39:1753.1 – All vendors must submit an Affidavit of Compliance (last page of this proposal request).

SECTION TWO
SCOPE OF WORK/SERVICES

Note carefully requirements below for proposal content and/or components that are mandatory.

2.1 SCOPE OF WORK/SERVICES

The Rapides Parish School Board is seeking Request for Proposals from qualified proposers/contractors who can demonstrate their ability to provide technology equipment and hardware to the District to obtain a solution for E- Rate services throughout Rapides Parish in the District's schools and support facilities. Rapides Parish School Board is seeking proposals for Firewall Smartnet Services. All installation and configuration of these network components will be performed by the Rapides Parish School Board and should not be included in any costs associated with this RFP.

See section 2.7 for further details.

2.2 PERIOD OF AGREEMENT

Contracts based on this RFP will be awarded on a yearly basis. The initial term will be from July 1, 2027 through June 30, 2028.

2.3 PRICE SCHEDULE

Prices proposed by the proposers should be submitted on a price schedule. Prices for the service level shall not increase above the submitted price for the term of any recommended contract(s). Proposer may submit more than one proposal for providing the specified services, each with different levels of service, contract terms, pricing and recommendations.

2.4 DELIVERABLES

The minimum deliverables (levels and type of services) listed in this section are the minimum desired from the successful proposer. Every proposer should describe what deliverables will be provided per their proposal, and how the proposed deliverables will be provided.

2.5 LOCATION

Unless otherwise specified, equipment and hardware will be delivered to the Rapides Parish School Board, Attn: Technology Department located at 501 Elliott Street, Alexandria, LA 71301.

2.6 PROPOSAL ELEMENTS

1. Proposer must submit detailed description(s) of proposed product(s) or solution(s).
2. Proposer must submit a detailed plan for implementation, if applicable.
3. Proposer must provide measurement/reporting tools used to monitor performance or usage, if applicable.
4. Proposer must submit a training plan for any training recommended by the Proposer, if applicable.
5. Monthly, annual, and quarterly usage reports may be required. Reports must be customized to meet specific requirements.
6. If appropriate, proposer should have industry expert(s) in educational technology solutions to guide users to the forefront in technology. Name, qualifications, and phone number(s) must be included.
7. Proposer must provide a specified team to support the business requirements of the project. Names, titles, and phone numbers must be provided.
8. Proposer must provide an overview of their current and future technology, their vision and timeline for migration to any future technologies, if applicable.
9. Proposer must supply a complete list and description of all supporting business partners.
10. Proposer must have the ability and technical resources to support technology, network and/or communications for school district client base as the school district continues to expand their network and technology infrastructure.
11. Proposer must submit such financial and experience requirements as are contained herein.

2.6.1 Financial Requirements

1. Proposer must submit a list of three similar or larger sizes of education or corporate accounts with which

proposer has similar solutions.
2. Proposer must provide evidence of five years of experience with similar sized contracts.
3. Proposer must submit its last audited financial statement or other documentation which show it has sufficient working capital to properly fund its proposal and that proposer has sufficient financial stability to service contract over its life.
4. Proposer should list the names and qualifications of all operational personnel and their proposed function under this RFP.

2.6.2 Technical and Performance Requirements

1. Supply resume of any proposed account associate(s), who must have RPSB's approval if contract is awarded.
2. Proposer/contractor will provide sufficient, trained personnel to perform the services established pursuant to this agreement and/or as set forth herein.
3. Proposer's personnel performing services under this Agreement will perform in a professional manner and will comply with proposer/contractor's and RPSB's applicable security and safety regulations. Background screening is mandatory under the "Louisiana Child Protection Act, R.S. 15:825.3, R.S. 17:15 and R.S. 46:51.2(A) or (B). No person convicted of a crime listed in LA R.S. 15:587.1(c) shall be employed by the contractor to perform services on-site in any RPSB facility. RPSB will provide copies of regulations, and applicable updates, to proposer for its personnel. Any costs associated with the screening will be the sole responsibility of the proposer/ contractor.
4. If RPSB is dissatisfied with the performance of any proposer/contractor personnel, the Contract Administrator will notify proposer/contractor of specific deficiencies in writing, and proposer/contractor will address these non-performance issues within 30 days. If RPSB remains dissatisfied with such performance after proposer/contractor has taken remedial action, proposer/contractor will remove such personnel and provide a replacement if, in RPSB judgment, it believes that the actions of such personnel warrant immediate action, the Contract Administrator will contact proposer/contractor and provide grounds for the request and proposer/contractor will replace said personnel.
5. Proposer/Contractor shall be deemed an independent contractor and shall not act as, or be an agent or employee of RPSB. Proposer/Contractor will provide for and pay the compensation of proposer/contractor personnel and be responsible for all taxes, which an employer is required to pay relating to the employment of employees, including workers' compensation.
6. Contractor/Proposer will conduct quarterly reviews of user satisfaction. Contractor/Proposer will prepare and present the survey review to RPSB.

2.6.3 Expenses

Travel, parking, other transportation fees, and telephone charges encountered by service personnel or account associate will be the responsibility of the Contractor/Proposer.

2.6.4 Proposer Requirements

1. Permanent, factory trained specialist capable of meeting the response time set forth in the Proposal,
2. Where onsite service will be required, a trained service force within a 50-mile radius from the main RPSB office.
3. An established program for service and support as demonstrated by contracts with comparable educational entities.
4. A clearly defined chain of command from the service technician to account associate to higher level service and support.
5. Established mechanism for resolution of complex or recurrent problems.
6. An in-house staff that is knowledgeable in the implementation and support of telecommunications services and devices into RPSB environment.

2.7 RFP REQUIREMENTS

The criteria for selection will be applied and interpreted solely at the discretion of RPSB. Proposals should include all necessary information that is pertinent to these evaluation criteria. RPSB will not refund or pay for any cost incurred prior to the award of the contract between the RPSB and the successful vendor. The proposals will be evaluated with consideration of, but not limited to, the following minimum criteria outlined. For any group proposed, proposers must submit a proposal for the entire group, except were indicated otherwise. Portions of a single group may not be singled out for a proposal. A proposer may submit a proposal for one or more groups. Any proposal must meet the minimum requirements of that group, but a proposer may submit any additional/alternate services that it believes will be beneficial to Rapides Parish School Board.

Proposals must be accompanied by brochures, product cut sheets, and/or specification sheets providing technical specifications as well as specific descriptions of goods and services and systems referenced in this RFP. If the literature, photographs or drawings differ in any manner from the systems and equipment being proposed, such differences MUST be explained in detail.

Any reference to a manufacturer's name and model number in the technical requirements is intended merely to establish a standard. Any hardware being proposed that is functionally equivalent will be considered equally acceptable provided that the equipment, so proposed, is, in the opinion of the RPSB, of equal substance and function. Functional equivalence must be proven through documentation provided by the vendor. Substitute items may be rejected at the discretion of the RPSB. During the evaluation phase, RPSB may seek additional information or require demonstrations of compatibility and/or equivalency from vendors who have functionally equivalent solutions to this RFP.

2.71 Technical Requirements
Brand and Model number below are specified for purposes of specifying the warranty services for the product which is in use. A different make and model will not be accepted. The following list represents the equipment in use which will need to be warrantied/serviced.

Item Description	Serial Number	Quantity
SNTC 8X5XNBD	JMX2630X0KZ	1
SNTC 8X5XNBD	JMX2630X0LK	1

SECTION THREE
EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

3.1 CRITERIA

The criteria listed below will be used to evaluate written proposals and the subsequent interviews. The scoring weight is listed for each criterion.

These criteria will be applied and interpreted solely at the discretion of the Evaluation Committee. Proposals should include all necessary information that is pertinent to these evaluation criteria. Additional information required for proper assessment of proposals may be requested from the Proposer/Contractor at the discretion of RPSB. The Evaluation Committee recognizes it is premature to place a major emphasis on projected financial benefits prior to the completion of the proposer's expert analysis/site audits and projections. The audits will define the potential scope and cost benefit.

The criteria are not ranked in order of importance. The sub-criteria are of approximate equal weight.

A. Qualifications and Capability (Scoring Weight: 20 %)

1. General Firm Information.
2. Experience of Firm. General experience in contracts of similar type, scope, and size
3. Scope of Services. Comprehensiveness of management and maintenance.
4. Financial Soundness**.** Financial soundness and stability of the Proposer. Completeness and strength (financial viability) of most recent annual financial statements or other documentation provided to RPSB.

B. Experience and Expertise (Scoring weight: 20%)

1. Project History. Quality of past projects completed with respect to scope, size, and type.
2. Personnel Information. Qualifications and relevant experience of the staff in project management and other areas of importance.

C. Technical Approach (Scoring Weight: 20%)

1. Overall approach including analysis, findings and subsequent recommendations for solutions.
2. Reasonableness of methodologies to effect solutions.
3. General plan for proposed solution and implementation schedule.
4. Any necessary additional training or technical implementation related to changing services/vendor from current.

D. Financial Analysis (Scoring Weight: 40%)

Evaluate by weighing: Cost of project, including but not limited to, any cost of changing services and nearness of cost of new proposal to cost of current services.

SECTION FOUR
CONTRACT PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

4.1 PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

Contractor will perform in accordance with the requirements and specifications of the RFP and resulting contract.

4.1.1 Service

For onsite service items, a factory trained Service and support for installed equipment and software for a 50 mile radius from the Central Office of Rapides Parish School Board. Service shall include routine repairs, emergency service (replacement, if necessary), application assistance, and parts and labor for proposer/contractor provided equipment, software, and accessories. Service hours must minimally parallel RPSB Central Office normal working hours, days and dates of operation. Where requested by RPSB:

- Proposer/Contractor will collect and electronically forward to RPSB Contract Administrator, usage data monthly basis.
- Proposer/Contractor shall guarantee service and/or equipment availability throughout the term of the contract.
- Proposer/Contractor must list the number of authorized service technicians within the stated 50- mile radius of Alexandria.
- Proposer/Contractor must provide RPSB with a detailed “Implementation Timeline” for supplying the requested equipment and hardware upon receipt of a purchase order.

4.1.2 Training

Proposer/Contractor must provide any needed on-site training for the proposed services and any associated hardware and software. Please describe the training program for the proposed system/solution. Training costs must be included in your pricing section of your proposal.

4.2 PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT/EVALUATION

- Proposer/Contractor’s Project Manager will report any problems immediately to RPSB Contract Administrator.
- Proposer/Contractor’s Project Manager will meet as needed with RPSB Contract Administrator on implementation and training.
- Contractor will provide RPSB Contract Administrator with a detailed report of usage on a monthly basis and will meet with RPSB Contract Administrator once per quarter for review of contract.
- Contractor will conduct annual survey to determine satisfaction level and contract needs at RPSB and review same with RPSB Contract Administrator.

AFFIDAVIT OF COMPLIANCE

Act 288 (SB 15) 2021 Regular Session

In accordance with La. R.S. 39:1753.1, no telecommunications, video surveillance equipment, computer, or other equipment containing a component which enables any form of network connectivity described by Section 88 (a) of the Fiscal Year 2019 National Defense Authorization Act (the "NDAA") or listed within La. R.S. 39:1753.1 shall be offered to the Rapides Parish School Board unless the equipment is from a manufacturer who is in compliance with the NDAA. By submitting a proposal, the Proposer attests that all equipment and components of the equipment offered is sourced from manufacturers which are in compliance with the NDAA. The successful Proposer shall provide documentation of compliance via affidavit below. Any award, contract or purchase in violation of this section shall be null and void.

On _____ (date), Proposer: _____(company name), declare that the articles herein specified were manufactured by the company indicated below, and they are to the best of my knowledge and belief, sourced all components for the manufacturing of said items from companies who are in compliance with the National Defense Authorization Act (the "NDAA") and La.R.S. 39:1753.1 as indicated below.

Item & Description	Quantity	Value

Company of Manufacture: _____

Company of Manufacture Address: _____

_____

Authorized Agent of Proposer: _____ (printed name)

Signature: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

This form must be included with your proposal.