E-Rate's Category 2 Wi-Fi and internal connections funding is very valuable to Nome Public Schools. We were able to replace our aging district's network backbone of network switches and Wi-Fi access points with this funding that otherwise would have been impossible as no other funding was available for this project. We used up all of our Category 2 funding for this. We have already started planning improved Wi-Fi coverage for the district in the next round of Category 2 funding if it becomes available to us.

Before this massive upgrade our last network switch and Wi-Fi access point refresh was over a decade ago. In that time our district's use of technology has grown tremendously from only a couple hundred devices to now well over one thousand devices that must be networked together. Our old equipment was not able to handle this massive increase in traffic and we often experienced slow performance for both students and staff.

One example of how the upgrade has improved our schools is our new network equipment is able to pass much more traffic and we have noticed significantly faster login times for students giving teachers back instructional time that had been used simply for getting everyone logged in to their computers before.

We hope that E-Rate Category 2 funding for schools continues as the use of technology will continue to grow in our schools and we will continue to need improvements to our network to take advantage of these opportunities for our students.

Thank you for your time,

Jacob Phillips
Director of Technology
Nome Public Schools