

Chairman Ajit Pai  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street SW,   
Washington, DC 20554

October 23, 2017

Dear Chairman Pai,

I am writing today in response to the Federal Communications Commission’s (FCC) Public Notice which, among other things, considers changes to the E-Rate program. Before delving into my response to the proposed changes, I want to thank the FCC for your continued support for the E-Rate program and for the critical programmatic and policy changes the commission adopted in 2014. The E-Rate program provides critical discounts to assist schools (like mine) to obtain affordable telecommunications and internet access.

Christian County Public Schools is located in Christian County, Kentucky. Christian County is situated on the Kentucky-Tennessee border in what is considered Western Kentucky. Christian County covers 724 square miles - more than half the size of the state of Rhode Island. The county is home to the incorporated towns of Crofton, Hopkinsville, LaFayette, Oak Grove and Pembroke. The county is comprised of several smaller unincorporated communities of Fairview, Fruithill, Fearsville, Fort Campbell North, Gracey, Herndon, Kelly, Lacy and St. Elmo. From modern subdivisions to old historic homes to inner-city neighborhoods to rural farms, the diversity of Christian County is reflected in its population. Christian County Public Schools (CCPS) is the 10th largest school district in the state of Kentucky. The student population of over 9,300 students is reflective of the larger diverse Christian County community. The district's free/reduced lunch is sixty-four percent. Thirty -three percent of our students are African American, six percent of our students are Hispanic, and fifty-six percent of our students are Caucasian. Twelve percent of our students are students with disabilities and the mobility of students within our district is twelve percent. Within the school district, there are at least 10 different languages represented. The district consists of ten elementary schools, three middle schools, and two high schools which are all accredited by the state of Kentucky and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The district also has a Career and Technical Center, Alternative School, Day Treatment Facility, and an Academy of Continuing Education - which has been recognized as an exceptional program. Fort Campbell, Kentucky, United States Army installation, is an integral part of the Christian County community. Almost twelve percent of our students are from military families. This contributes to the high rate of mobility of Christian County Students.

The E-Rate program is a program succeeding in its mission. As the FCC moves forward with this public notice, it is prudent to remain focused on the fact that E-Rate is a program that works. Any changes to the E-Rate program should be focused on expanding a successful program that has yet to reach its full potential and ensuring the FCC remains a good steward of the changes adopted 2014, allowing those changes to progress and play out as intended.

E-Rate played a critical role is the rapid and significant expansion of connectivity in schools, and the 2014 modernization was a much needed update to ensure more schools and libraries are connected to broadband. The E-Rate’s investment in Category 2 Wi-Fi and internal connections funding is extremely valuable and could not be replaced by school, district or state funds.

Christian County School district has already used most of its E-Rate Category 2 allotment updating switches throughout the district and crucial cabling needed in three of our schools. The connectivity provided by these Category 2 items has improved our school or district’s educational experience in using technology devices for online instruction.

Christian County School district plans to use its remaining E-Rate Category 2 allotment by 2020 for the replacement of aging access points throughout our schools. We anticipate that the connectivity provided by these Category 2 items will improve our school or district’s electronic educational learning.

In closing, I reiterate my district’s continued, strong support for and reliance upon the E-Rate program for being able to access and afford the high-speed connectivity that is so central to our students’ learning. Thank you for considering these comments.

Sincerely,

Tracy Pelletier

