

July 15, 2016

Received & Inspected

JUL 25 2016

FCC Mail Room

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

RE: Request for Review and/or Waiver by Sweetwater City Schools et al. of Funding Decisions by the Universal Service Administrative Company, Docket No. 02-6

DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

Dear Ms. Dortch:

Murfreesboro City Schools truly appreciates the E-rate program. It has made a very positive impact on our children and our efforts to make them 21st Century citizens. However, as a member of the Sweetwater Consortium, *Murfreesboro City is now in danger of losing \$505,542* since the Consortium has been denied E-rate funding by the USAC. As Director of Murfreesboro City Schools, I am requesting immediate action by the Commission to reinstate that funding so that the negative impacts of that denial on our district can end.

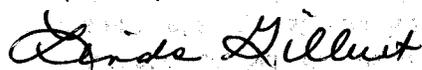
Murfreesboro City Schools has been using ENA for more than a decade. And ENA has provided our district with consistent, reliable, cost-effective, excellent services--consistently proving the validity of the scoring process. Broadband connectivity is a vital tool for student learning; however, if funding is denied by the Commission, our Assistant Superintendent who oversees our budget has estimated the impact to our budget to be more than a half-million dollars and has said if the appeal is not granted, "we are going to be really hurting."

Murfreesboro is in a time of growth. We are planning new schools, maintaining schools that are a half-century old, and hiring teachers to meet the increased numbers of students. Our city has done a good job of that in the past. However, if our district loses a half million dollars for the amount we "owe":

- We cannot remove 25-year-old carpet from those schools and replace it with tile.
- We cannot purchase new technology for schools that have outdated projectors and whiteboards.
- We cannot hire academic coaches to help this year's 80+ new teachers gain pedagogical expertise.
- We cannot hire an additional ESL teacher for our increasing Limited English Proficient population.

Murfreesboro City Schools is requesting that the Commission act as quickly as possible to grant our appeal and direct USAC to provide funding to our district so we can meet the needs of our children. Over the past several years, our district has made a renewed commitment to excellence in education for our students so that the future work can be ensured. The goals of E-Rate can be met and are visible in our community. However, if the program is not funded, if we are required to pay back more than a half-million dollars, those goals will be dramatically damaged. Again, we are asking the Commission to act immediately to grant our appeal and to direct USAC to provide funding to our district.

Respectfully,



Linda Arms Gilbert, Ed.D.
Director of Schools

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