



# Fresno Academy of Civic and Entrepreneurial Leadership

*a free public charter high school*

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June 14, 2013

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

FROM: Fresno Fresno Academy of Civic and Entrepreneurial Leadership (ACEL)

Appellant/Organization Name: Fresno Fresno Academy of Civic and Entrepreneurial Leadership (ACEL)

Billed Entity Number: 16063451

Form 470 Application Number: 619120001131690

Form 471 Application Number: 929101

Contact Person Name: Stephen H. Morris

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Ref. CC Docket No. 96-45

Ref. CC Docket No. 02-6

RE: Petition for Reconsideration

Please accept this letter as a Request for Waiver of the Form 471 filing deadline of 3/14/2013 for the FY 2013-2014 funding year. I request that the 3/14/2013 deadline be waived for Fresno ACEL and the acceptance Form 471, in accordance with the planned ACD Date of 4/09/2013. Our application had required posting date of 28 days prior to the submission date of the Form 471. Therefore, we are currently not able to continue with the online submission, that had been completed in its entirety up to Block 5.

Due to an administrative error, Form 470 was filed on 2/14/2013 and then posted 3/8/2013 after errors were corrected (See Attached). I would have not re-filed Form 470 unless instructed to do so by a representative from USAC. The representative from USAC who contacted me informed me of the needed corrections. The representative stated that the best course of action was to correct the errors and re-submit the 470 application; this advice was incorrect. The FCC Wireline Attorney assigned to the case informed me, that I should have left the errors because they were non-material. The non-material errors would not have affected the status of the application and pushed the file date back 22 days for the form 471. Please note, that I filed all the information that the online filing process

Stephen H. Morris, Principal /Executive Director, smorris@acelfresno.org



would allow on the Form 471 FY 2013-2014, on time. I was not able to proceed past Block 5 because the allowable filing date for the Form 471 had been pushed back several days due the directions given by the representative at USAC who contacted me with instructions which I followed exactly as they were given. In order to maintain compliance with both the FCC and USAC regulations, I could not file the Form 471 prior to 4/9/2013.

Fresno CA is deeply impoverished. 82% of the children in Fresno are improvised. Fresno has the dubious distinction of being the “poorest city in California and in the nation”. Fresno is the heart of California’s Central Valley. In 2010, The Economist, a researched based online magazine labeled the Central Valley of California the “Appalachia of the West”. Nearly 48% of Fresno County consists of an immigrant population, less than 20% of Fresno ACEL parents have a high school diploma. Fresno has the lowest high school graduation rate in state of California at approximately 70%. We service a struggling demographic that needs additional resources to ensure that all students become college and career ready graduates.

Alan Cheung’s latest research, Effects of Education Technology Application and Student Achievement, examines 40 years of research focused on technology use and students of color. Cheung’s research demonstrates a positive correlation to higher rates of school success and higher graduation rates to the use of technology among students of color (Cheung, 2013). Students of color face a tremendous hurdle called poverty. Despite the apparent success of the use technology, access is greatly limited by poverty. This lack of access to technology created by poverty is the equity issue of our time. Our proposed project would grant access to a research based education and provide equitable opportunity for all our students to become the college and career ready graduates that we envision.

We have no other way to fund this project at this time. My role as Principal/Executive Director contains many subtitles from custodian to curriculum development and from building collaborations to family adviser to many of our impoverished families. To the best of my understanding I made every effort to comply with each USAC request. It is our goal that Fresno ACEL will become a model and advisor for other schools with majority free and reduced lunch student populations. As a model school Fresno ACEL will use E-rate funding as leverage to obtain other resources in order to build sustainability for like-minded schools in California’s Central Valley. Given the significance our students’ needs I have made every effort to follow the guidelines as given and I to follow up accordingly.

The following is a narrative that I hope will broaden your understanding as to the scope of our project.

Fresno ACEL has been in operation since 2008. The Fresno ACEL charter was renewed by the Fresno Unified School District for five more years. The Fresno ACEL charter states that our school is a project based school operating in a technology rich environment. 70% of our students are from economically challenged homes.



Special needs students make up 20% our school population and 20% our students are English Language Learners. Over 95% of ACEL students lack access to the technological resources needed to become successful college and career ready graduates. ACEL is committed to meeting learning needs of all students and providing equitable access to improvised students. With the proper technology this task can be accomplished. However, the lack of resources and the deferrals of apportionments by the state have greatly affected our ability to provide quality technology based services to our students.

Students at ACEL use tablets and iPads instead of textbooks to develop critical thinking skills, collaborative projects and effective communication skills. Unfortunately, the tablets are without 3G and 4G capability limiting students' ability to complete school assigned work at home. ACEL teachers prepare lessons together across curriculum and grade levels using the open source, web based materials to meet the diverse learning needs of their students. The limitation of our current technology has hindered the development and creativity of teachers and the learning of our students. Technology and high quality project based educational programs are difficult to fund and as such are often found in schools that have very few Free and Reduced Lunch students.

Improving internet, networking and wireless services would greatly enhance the creativity of teachers as they design lessons, assess student performance and provide real time feedback to students and families. Improving our technology with video conferencing and a parent portal access would allow ACEL's parents to access and monitor their child's academic growth and become more involved as informed partners in their child's education. Through the use of technology and dynamic interaction, ACEL students would be able to monitor their own growth and set realistic learning goals.

The budget crisis faced by public education has tremendously reduced professional develop for teachers. Without opportunities to grow professionally our teachers' ability to assess and monitor student growth is negatively impacted. Through enhanced networking and video conferencing teachers can participate in professional development and network with teachers around the world to improve student learning through the use project based education and the use of research based technology.

The additional services and enhancement provided by E-Rate would allow us to fulfill the true meaning of our charter, that every student regardless economic background and language barriers would have access to the best learning opportunities available to prepare them for success in higher education and future careers.

We thank you for considering our Request for Waiver. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me. Thank you for your time.



Sincerely,



Stephen H. Morris

Stephen Morris  
Principal/Executive Director, Fresno ACEL

