

Winona R-III School District
Scott D. Lindsey, Superintendent
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Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

September 16, 2013

Dear Sir/Madame,

I am writing today in response to the FCC's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking which, among other things, proposes changes to the E-Rate program. Before delving into my response to the proposed changes, I want to first thank the FCC for your continued support for the E-Rate program. The E-Rate program provides critical discounts to assist schools (like mine) to obtain affordable telecommunications and internet access.

The Winona R-III School District is a small, rural school district in south central Missouri serving 482 students in grades K-12, with approximately 85% on the Free and Reduced School Lunch Program. The E-Rate program is the number one source of funding for our technology needs. Without this program, we would not be able to provide necessary technology resources for our district.

The E-Rate program is a program succeeding in its mission. As the FCC moves forward with this NPRM, it is prudent to remain focused on the fact that E-Rate is a program that works and that any changes to the E-Rate program should be focused on expanding a successful program that has yet to reach its full potential. The current program, while needing some marginal updates to its structure, is most strained by increasing demand for E-Rate-supported services and persistently low funding. The single most effective step the FCC can take to bolster E-Rates current and future success is to provide \$5 billion in funding, an amount commensurate with current demand.

There are additional programmatic changes and restructuring that can provide additional efficiencies and savings. To rely solely on programmatic efficiencies, however, without providing additional new funding is a shortsighted solution, a policy that fails to address the program's most significant problem: inadequate funding.

I think this NPRM is an opportunity to tackle the important work of expanding a successful program. E-Rate is not a broken program that needs to be fixed; it is a successful program that schools and libraries continue to rely on, a program that must continue to provide funding critical for telecommunications and connectivity.

Any change in the E-Rate program that would limit funding would cripple our district's technology resources and would make it impossible for us to continue providing reasonable services to our students and staff. It would greatly benefit us if the E-Rate program were not oversubscribed and underfunded. An increase in funding would allow us to accelerate the implementation of our complete technology needs. Trying to stay ahead of the curve when it comes to high technology isn't easy. In order for the students attending Winona R-III School District to become college ready and stay globally competitive, it's imperative that we, as educators, deliver digital learning experiences so they can positively engage in quality instruction.

Thank you for considering my response as you move forward with your decision on the E-Rate program. I applaud the FCC for its continued efforts to protect the already oversubscribed E-Rate program by ensuring the future of this successful program. I urge you to support significant increased funding for the E-Rate program, and to ensure that the program and its limited resources are protected and preserved.

Sincerely,



Scott D. Lindsey
Superintendent