



Oakwood Community Unit School District No. 76

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April 21, 2014

VIA ELECTRONIC DELIVERY

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street S.W.
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Sir/Madame:

I am writing today on behalf of the Oakwood Community Unit School District #76 in response to the FCC's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking which proposes changes to the E-Rate program. Our district serves approximately 1,100 students. The E-Rate program provides our district critical discounts to assist us to procure affordable telecommunication services and Internet access.

Without E-Rate funding, our district would not be able to fully fund other areas of our school district's technology program. We are a district with a moderate poverty level of approximately 35%. The use of E-Rate funds are essential to the quality of education we can provide. Without the approximate \$23,000 we annually utilize, we would have to use some other funds which may include classroom supplies, building repair funds, or even personnel. E-Rate funding is critical to our district needs as we continue to move forward with projects to implement wireless in our school buildings and maintain the infrastructure to support our current and future needs.

The E-Rate program is 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 this program should be focused on expanding a successful program that has yet to reach its potential. The current single most effective step the FCC can take to bolster the E-Rate program's 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 short-sighted solution; a policy that fails to address the program's most significant problem: inadequate funding.

I think that 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 on which schools and libraries continue to rely. It is a program that must continue to provide funding critical for telecommunications and connectivity.

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 significantly increased funding for the E-Rate program and to ensure that the program and its limited resources are protected and preserved.

Sincerely,

David Calkins
Technology Coordinator