

March 2020

E-rate FAQ: FCC Releases New Rules for Ed Tech Funding

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The federal E-rate funding program is an essential resource for supporting connectivity in schools and libraries. In 2014, the FCC started a five-year Category 2 budget trial to fund critical network infrastructure. This test run would determine if the approach was an effective way to provide more equitable access to Category 2 services nationwide.

In July 2019 THE Journal covered the pending expiration of the Category 2 budget approach and the release of the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking from the FCC, which requested stakeholder feedback on their proposal to create a permanent Category 2 budget system.

In December 2019, the FCC released a long-awaited Report and Order making the Category 2 system permanent and streamlining the application process.

Here are the ed tech funding updates that E-rate applicants will need to know for funding year 2020 and beyond.

Q: Has anything changed for FY2020?

A: The FCC determined that FY2020 will act as a gap year between the old Category 2 regulations, and new rules outlined in the Report and Order.


Here are some key updates to keep in mind...

Category 2 budgets will be calculated using the same per-site methodology used in FY2015 to FY2019, but FY2020 budgets will receive a one-time 20 percent increase — a unique opportunity for E-rate applicants.

FY2020 Category 2 Budget Multipliers:

- Schools: \$195.63 per student
- Libraries with IMLS Locale Codes 11, 12, 21: \$6.52 per square foot
- Libraries with all other IMLS Locale Codes: \$3.00 per square foot
- Entities at the Funding Floor: \$11,998.43 per site

According to the FCC, the FY2020 E-rate Eligible Services List included “limited changes” for FY2020. The Commission declined to include new services or functionality as eligible for either Category 1 or Category 2 services.



Q: What's in store for ed tech funding in FY2021?

A: Budget cycles, calculations and floors are all changing come FY2021. It's critical that E-rate applicants read and understand the new Category 2 rules to make the most of their funds.

Q: How will E-rate applicant budgets be impacted?

A: Beginning in FY2021, all applicant budgets will be reset to the full amount available under the new Category 2 rules. As part of this modification, the FCC will adopt district-wide and library system-wide budget calculations.

Q: What are the new budget cycles?

A: The FCC's revised ed-tech funding rules adopt fixed five-year budget cycles. The first cycle will run from FY2021 through FY2025. Applicants can submit E-rate applications in any or all Funding Years during this five-year cycle, with a new budget cycle beginning in subsequent five-year periods (e.g. FY2026). There will be no rollover of funds from cycle-to-cycle.

Q: How will budgets be calculated?

A: A popular request from E-rate stakeholders is being fulfilled: starting in FY2021 the program will adopt district-wide and library system-wide Category 2 budgets. This means school districts and library systems will have a single budget cap to administer.

The per-site funding "floor" for smaller sites will increase from \$9,200 to \$25,000. Budgets will be calculated at the start of each five-year cycle. The FY2021 budget multiplier factors are \$167 per student for schools, and \$4.50 per square foot for libraries.

Q: What about the budget 'floor' for smaller sites?

A: To ensure sufficient funding to deploy internal connections, the new FCC rules include an increased funding floor for smaller sites. The updated floor will switch to a pre-discount level of \$25,000 over the five-year funding cycle beginning in FY2021.


Q: What are some other Category 2 changes coming for FY2021?

A: FCC rules currently include a prohibition on equipment transfers that was meant to prevent applicants from circumventing the then-existent per-site Category 2 budget rules. Now, equipment transfer rules will be relaxed for equipment purchased with E-rate discounts in FY2021 and forward, affording applicants more flexibility to deploy equipment where it is most needed.

In a day and age where internet access is a requirement rather than a luxury, it's critical that school districts and library systems have adequate resources to remain connected. The recent updates to E-rate's Category 2 rules mark an exciting time for applicants.

For regular coverage of E-rate updates, register for Funds For Learning's webinar series. If you're interested in information about broadband resources, stay tuned for the release of Connected Nation and Funds For Learning's new tool, Connect K-12.

*Brian Stephens, Client Solutions Manager
Funds For Learning.*



Tip of the Month

If you have not used CES Ancillary Services during 2019-20 but might like to for 2020-21, please contact the CES Ancillary Department soon! The Director is Lisa Chacon-Kedge, her email is lisa@ces.org, and her phone is 505-344-5470 x103.

Procurement News

1) Feb. 2020 - Contract Renewals

17-024-Body Worn Cameras Equipment, Supplies and Related Materials ✓; **18-002- LED Lighting, Equipment, Supplies, Materials and Installation** ✓ **18-017-AEPA (18.5-A Maintenance, Repair and Operations (MRO))** ✓; **18.5-B Career and Technical Education** ✓; **18.5-C Athletic Equipment & Supplies** ✓; **19-013-AEPA (019-A Telescopic Bleachers & Stadium Seating)** ✓; **019-B Custodial Supplies & Equipment** ✓; **019-C Office Supplies** ✓; **019-E School & Instructional Supplies** ✓; **19-040-GSA Facilities Maintenance & Management** ✓

3) New Contract Awards

2020-12	(AEPA) Vehicles	Phil Long Melloy	2020-12N-A701-ALL Under review by Melloy
2020-21	Road & Landscape Materials	J & H Services Inc Mountain States Const. Stites Enterprises	2020-21B-C102-567 2020-21B-C103-4 2020-21B-C101-8
2020-26	Food Service Equipment & Related	McComas National Restaurant NM Kitchen (Standard Restaurant Supply)	2020-26N-C102-ALL 2020-26B-C101-ALL 2020-26B-C103-ALL
Awards and Contracts under Development in Feb. 2020			
2020-02	Under \$25K & Under \$60K – Grounds Maintenance		
2020-03	Under \$25K & Under \$60K – Mechanical / Electrical / Plumbing Maintenance		
2020-04	Under \$25K & Under \$60K – Facility General Maintenance		
2020-28	Hazardous Waste Materials		
2020-27	School & Activity Buses		

2) Feb. 2020 - Contract Expirations

16-010 Hazardous Materials – Abatement, Disposal, Analysis & Re-Inspection

Calendar & Events

EVENTS: [MORE INFO: Here](#)

- 1-3 NMPED/NMASBO Budget Conference
- 3 TAP Workshop
- 5-7 Educators Rising State Conference
- 10 TAP Workshop
- 11 TAP Workshop
- 8 Daylight Savings begins at 2:00 a.m.
- 17 St. Patrick's Day
- 17 TAP Workshop
- 18 TAP Workshop
- 19 TAP Workshop
- 19 Spring (Vernal) Equinox
- 20 International Earth Day
- 24 TAP Workshop
- 26 TAP Workshop

March 2020

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

- **NMPED/NMASBO BUDGET CONFERENCE**
- **EDUCATORS RISING CONFERENCE**
- **ST. PATRICK'S DAY**
- **TAP WORKSHOPS**

If you know of relevant events or would like yours in our next Newsletter please email: jim@ces.org

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