

# **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

**E-Rate Eligible Products and Services  
Funding Year 7/1/2010 – 6/30/2011**



**BRIGHT STAR SCHOOLS CONSORTIUM  
BEN 16056685**

## **0. E-Rate Background**

The information in this Request For Proposals [RFP] is provided in conjunction with the Schools and Libraries Division [SLD] Forms 470 and 471, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the FCC Universal Service Fund (a.k.a., "E-Rate") discounts. These programs provide discounts for: certain telecommunications products and services, including (Priority 1) voice and data communications; Internet access; and (Priority 2) internal connections; and basic maintenance of internal connections. For more information about these Federal programs, and before responding to this RFP, please refer to the SLD web site, [www.usac.org/sl/](http://www.usac.org/sl/), or call the SLD Help Line at 888-203-8100. Please do not contact school personnel either with general questions about E-Rate, or to offer ineligible services or services not requested on this RFP. Vendors must have a valid Service Provider Identification Number [SPIN] and meet other criteria, as further described herein. Service providers must be prepared to discount invoices to the school and submit the balance to the E-Rate program via Service Provider Invoice [SPI] forms, as specified by the SLD. Invoicing information is further described below.

Answers to questions of general interest from qualified vendors may be posted on this web site, and should be considered to be formal addenda to this RFP. This may occur from time to time during the bidding period; please be sure to check back periodically while preparing your proposal. Telephone, facsimile, or snail mail inquiries are strongly discouraged, and are apt to be overlooked during proposal evaluation. The Applicant is a school, school consortium, or school district and does not have the personnel resources to respond to generalized inquiries or blanket advertising (such as for desktop computers or desktop filtering software) broadly targeting E-Rate applicants. Such materials shall be deemed "Unsolicited Commercial Email" [UCE] (better known as "spam") and are apt to cause *all* of your information to be discarded, your email address to become blacklisted by our email filtering system, and/or (at a minimum) to divert reviewer attention from any materials intended as legitimate responses to this RFP. Therefore, please clearly indicate to which of the following requirements your proposal is a valid response. Your proposal should refer to corresponding Form 470 Number and Billed Entity Number, and should clearly indicate your currently valid SPIN number and FCC Registration Number [FCC RN]. Descriptions of products and services should provide sufficient line item detail, and be submitted in a suitable format, for use as Form 471, Item 21 attachments, without the need for subsequent modification by the applicant.

### **1.0 Introduction and Scope**

For funding year 2010-2011, Bright Star Schools Consortium (hereinafter, "Applicant") seeks proposals for eligible products and services in the following categories of service:

- Telecommunications
- Internet Access
- Internal Connections
- Basic Maintenance of Internal Connections

A list of all entities participating in this RFP is included as Attachment A.

Applicant intends to obtain appropriate, eligible products and services to improve telecommunications and/or Internet access services and/or technology infrastructure improvements and/or basic maintenance of eligible internal connections, so as to improve student achievement in

its classrooms. Qualified persons interested in bidding on these products and services (hereinafter, “Vendor”) should submit bids including all costs associated with the delivery of the products and services (parts, labor, installation, testing, acceptance, configuration, turn-up, shipping, and so on). Any line items not eligible for E-Rate discounts according to SLD program rules should be clearly identified as such, and such items should be minimized. Vendors of ineligible products and services, however useful to school technology programs (such as, say end user computers) should *not* respond to this RFP. Applicant will seek whatever other products and services are required separately. Attempts to include excessive quantities of ineligible items or even the appearance of attempting to circumvent program rules will cause Vendor’s submission to be deemed nonresponsive and result in disqualification of your bid.

**1.1 Evaluation Methodology**

Each responsive proposal meeting the minimum qualifications will be evaluated using weighted criteria including cost of the eligible products and services, and other factors as determined by the Applicant. For any given category of service, the proposal that is deemed to be in the best interest of the Applicant, based on scoring these factors, shall be selected for award. *Decisions are not solely based on the lowest price.*<sup>1</sup> After elimination of nonresponsive bids or bids that are disqualified for specific reasons described herein, proposals will be evaluated based upon the requirements described below. The evaluation criteria to be used are:

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Weight</b>
Cost of the Eligible Goods and Services	25%
Technical merit	22%
Prior track record with E-Rate	20%
Industry credentials and certifications	18%
Long term experience in K-12	15%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Within a given category of service, Applicant has a preference, but not a requirement, for turnkey solutions, wherein a single contract with a single vendor completely addresses all requirements for that category. In the case of Priority 1 services – where applicable – there is a preference for inclusion of all necessary customer premise equipment [CPE] as part of an end-to-end solution.*

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<sup>1</sup>As is required for compliance with E-Rate regulations, price of the eligible products and services will be the *highest weighted factor* but *not the only factor* taken into consideration.

## 2. REQUIRED TERMS AND CONDITIONS

### 2.0 Submission Deadline & Delivery Address

The deadline for submission of proposals is midnight, Pacific Time, on **February 5, 2010**.

Proposals should be submitted as follows (all three elements are required):

- Via email (single file, consecutive page numbered, MS Office or PDF format) to:  
[erate.bss@learningtech.org](mailto:erate.bss@learningtech.org)
- Signature page(s), executed by the Vendor, via facsimile, to:  
[866-801-8667](tel:866-801-8667)
- Paper copy, with original signatures, with outside of envelope clearly identified as follows:  
**E-RATE TECHNOLOGY BID**  
5431 W 98th St,  
Los Angeles, CA 90016

*All three elements are required.* It is sufficient for paper copy to be postmarked by the submission deadline, but in any event it must be received no later than 12:00 noon on the second working day after the electronic submission deadline, including the date signed and the binding original signature of the vendor's authorized representative. There should be a place for the Applicant to sign and date, if your bid is accepted. It is the sole responsibility of the respondents to ensure that their responses arrive in a timely manner. The Applicant has the right but not the obligation to reject all late or incomplete submissions, as the Applicant determines to be in its own best interest, or to contact vendors such as to seek ministerial corrections. The Applicant has the right but not the obligation to determine a short list for final negotiations and contract revisions after the submission deadline or to accept the winning proposal and execute it as is.

Oral and telephone bids will not be considered, nor will modifications of proposals by such communication be considered. The completed proposal form shall be without erasures or alterations. Delivery of the proposals will be considered authorization by the Vendor to make a contract, if awarded.

### 2.1 Costs Associated with Preparation of the Vendor's Response

The Applicant will not be liable for any cost incurred by the respondents in preparing responses to this RFP or negotiations associated with award of a contract.

### 2.2 Subcontractors

All subcontractors working on Applicant's projects must be insured and drug-free and must meet the same standards and qualifications applicable to regular employees. Applicant has a preference for limiting the use of subcontractors (reflected within one or more of the bid evaluation factors).

### 2.3 Interpretation and Additional Information and Addenda

Any interpretation, correction, clarification or change of the RFP will be made by addendum. Interpretations, corrections, or changes to the RFP made in any other manner will not be binding, and the Vendors shall not rely upon such interpretations, corrections, or changes. The Applicant will

issue any changes or corrections by posting them at <http://www.learningtech.org/erate/bss/>. It shall be the sole responsibility of the Vendor to check for all posted addenda prior to submitting their bid. Questions or requests for clarification of this RFP should be sent to the bid submission email address shown above. Vendors should not attempt to contact Applicant personnel by telephone or in person during the bidding period, since such contacts can potentially taint the fair and level playing field. Answers to questions submitted by email will be posted on the web site and should be considered amendments or clarifications that are integral to this RFP.

## 2.4 Omissions

Omissions in the proposal of any provision herein described shall not be construed as to relieve the Vendor of any responsibility or obligation to the complete and satisfactory delivery, operation, and support of any and all equipment or services.

## 2.5 Financing

After notification of award and prior to the start of work, the Vendor will receive purchase order(s) for the products and services for which the Vendor will be responsible as a result of the RFP. Purchase order(s) will show the total cost of services and the amount that is the responsibility of the local school system as well as the E-Rate discount. **The final payment of this project will be rendered only after an extensive final walk-through or acceptance procedure at the completion of the installation. Applicant will strictly enforce the bid guidelines and the quality of the installation.** Final testing will take place in the presence of a designated technology staff member. Applicant technology staff or designated consultants will have total discretion to require any needed changes to meet current industry standards including those of the selected manufacturers in the case of eligible products and to fully comply with the specifications contained in the RFP and proposal.

This project is being requested for funding through E-Rate. If funded, all SLD payment schedules will take priority. If the project is not funded, then local funding policies will take place, in the event Applicant decides to proceed without E-Rate funding. In either case, the above paragraph regarding compliance with acceptance procedures prior to final payment will be strictly enforced.

## 2.6 Warranty

The Vendor shall fully warrant with the manufacturer's warranty all items provided under this RFP against defects in material and workmanship. Warranty information should be on a per item basis on the RFP and detailed in the Bid Proposal. The vendor may also be expected to provide on-site service in addition to the manufacturer's warranty, so please list this service in detail where applicable.<sup>2</sup> Should any defects in workmanship or material, excepting ordinary wear and tear, appear during the warranty period, the manufacturer and his representative shall repair or replace such items immediately upon receipt of a written notice from the Applicant.

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<sup>2</sup> However, such services may fall under the category of Basic Maintenance, depending on the proposed services.

## **2.7 Price Quotations**

Price quotations are to include the furnishing of all materials, equipment, maintenance, shipping cost, delivery, installation, taxes, surcharges, and the provision of all labor and services necessary or proper for the completion of the work, except as may be otherwise expressly provided in the Contract Documents. The Applicant will not be liable for any costs beyond those proposed herein and awarded. Time and materials quotations will be unacceptable. Please clearly identify costs associated with necessary but ineligible items and keep such items to a minimum; our intent is to seek *only* eligible services with this RFP, to the extent technically feasible.

## **2.8 Evaluation of Responses**

The Applicant may at its discretion and at no fee to the Applicant, invite any Vendor to appear for questioning during response evaluation for the purpose of clarifying statements in the response.

## **2.9 Right to Reject**

The Applicant reserves the right to accept or reject all proposals when the rejection is in the best interest of the Applicant, such as when no bid is deemed to be cost-effective or when conditions change significantly such as due to unexpectedly low enrollment. The Applicant also reserves the right to award without further discussion. Therefore, responses should be submitted initially with the most favorable pricing and terms that the Vendor is able to propose. Certain criteria such as lack of certifications have been indicated herein as potential causes for disqualification; awards will be to the highest ranked Vendor, with price as the highest weighted factor, after elimination of disqualified or nonresponsive bids. Applicant reserves the right to award for some, all, or none of the products and services sought herein; if your bid does not allow for selection of a subset of line items or minor variations in the quantities required, please clearly indicate these limitations.

## **2.10 Form of Contract**

As indicated on the corresponding Form 470, Applicant will consider all allowable forms of contract including multi-year contracts and contracts with voluntary renewals. Winning vendor should not start work or incur expenses until explicitly notified to do so in writing by School Purchase Order or equivalent written instrument; notification of award is *not* in itself authorization to start work. Applicant has the right but not the obligation to begin work prior to Funding Commitment Decision Letter and approval of funding; Applicant has a right but not the obligation to cancel or reduce the scope of any project for which E-Rate funding is denied or reduced. For multi-year contracts or contracts with voluntary renewals, these rights apply to each successive funding year independently. Vendor commits to honor pricing and scope of work (some part substitutions might be required over time) for up to 18 months while awaiting FCDL. Bidder warrants that all work shall be performed according to best practices in the field of endeavor and in a manner that is fully compliant with all aspects of the E-Rate program, including invoicing for and requiring payment of the Applicant share. In no event should work commence prior to July 1, 2010. If applicable, Internal Connections contracts should be valid until at least September 30, 2011 and automatically extend in the event that the corresponding FRN is extended by SLD. Contracts for other services should begin and end on SLD funding year boundaries (July 1 – June 30). ***This RFP and all addenda issued pursuant to this RFP shall be incorporated by reference into the final contract.***

***This RFP and any resulting contract(s) are intended to be fully compliant with all applicable state and local laws and purchasing regulations, as well as with the rules of the E-Rate program.***

Vendors are invited to bid on the entire project or on substantial, well-defined portions of the project. For example, one vendor might bid only on cabling infrastructure, with a separate vendor bidding only on active elements. All bidders must have valid SPIN numbers, FCC Registration Numbers, and up-to-date SPAC filings with the SLD; providers of services in the telecommunications category must also be Eligible Telecommunications Providers according to the SLD database (common carriers paying into the USAC fund).

## **2.11 Bidders Conference and/or Walk-Through**

A Bidders Conference and/or Walk Through will be held 9:00 AM on January 22, 2010 at:  
5431 W 98th St,  
Los Angeles, CA 90016

Attendance is *not* required; answers to clarifying questions not adequately explained in the existing RFP materials will be posted as RFP addenda on the web site for the benefit of those unable to attend. However, depending on the specific bid evaluation criteria, described elsewhere in this document, non-attendance could possibly affect scoring of proposals on one or more secondary factors. All Bidders coming to the Bidders Conference and/or Walk-Through are required to RSVP to [erate.bss@learningtech.org](mailto:erate.bss@learningtech.org). This will allow us to notify bidder of any pending changes to the time, location or RFP.

## **2.12 Bright Star Schools Background Information**

Bright Star Schools currently consists of two schools on two campuses. The middle school, Stella, is split between the Mansfield campus (grades 5-6) and the 98<sup>th</sup> Street campus (grades 7-8). The high school shares the 98<sup>th</sup> Street campus with Stella 7-8. The administrative areas for both schools are also on the 98<sup>th</sup> Street campus. The Mansfield campus is currently supported by infrastructure purchased with E-Rate support in 2007-2008. The 98<sup>th</sup> Street campus is currently supported by infrastructure purchased without E-Rate support. Each campus has its own Internet access. Data communication between the campuses is currently provided through Internet-based VPN.

Bright Star Schools has a long-term goal of consolidating server infrastructure at the Mansfield campus, with the 98<sup>th</sup> Street campus and future campuses accessing data services by high-bandwidth communications to the Mansfield campus.

For Internet and intercampus data communications, Bright Star Schools seeks a solution that provides scalable bandwidth starting with at least 9 Mbps between campuses and at least 100 Mbps Internet bandwidth for each campus. Two possible architectures are:

- A high-bandwidth Internet connection for each campus, with a dedicated line between the campuses
- A high-bandwidth Internet connection at the Mansfield campus only, with a high-performance WAN connecting the 98<sup>th</sup> Street campus (and future campuses) to the Mansfield

campus.

Bright Star Schools is open to other architectures that provide the Internet and intercampus bandwidth needed to support the curriculum goals of Bright Star's technology plan. While an integrated solution is preferred, Bright Star is open to having different vendors for the Internet and WAN solutions.

For E-Rate purposes Bright Star Schools has established a Consortium (BEN 16056685) that includes:

<b>BEN</b>	<b>Entity Name</b>
16046469	BRIGHT STAR SECONDARY CHARTER ACADEMY
16035321	STELLA MIDDLE CHARTER ACADEMY
16056877	STELLA MIDDLE CHARTER ACADEMY AT 98TH ST
16056683	BRIGHT STAR SCHOOLS CENTRAL MANAGEMENT OFFICE

### **3. PRODUCTS AND SERVICES SOUGHT**

#### **Categories and Specifications**

##### **3.1 Telecommunications Services**

###### **3.1.1 Managed VoIP or similar Priority 1 eligible solution**

Reliable voice and data communications between classrooms, campuses, families, and the outside world, including:

- Local/long-distance/911 telephone service
- Telephone capabilities required for security alarm, fire alarm, and fax
- Full-feature voicemail system with up to 50 voicemail boxes
- Phone directory and conferencing services

Capacity requirements:

- Mansfield campus: Up to 17 lines, including up to 12 voice lines, up to 2 dedicated lines for fire alarm, up to 1 dedicated line for security system, and up to 2 fax lines.
- 98<sup>th</sup> Street campus: Up to 25 lines, including up to 18 voice lines, up to 2 dedicated lines for fire alarm, up to 1 dedicated line for security system, and up to 4 fax lines.

### **3.1.2 Digital data transmission service between two sites**

See also Internet Access, since WAN solution may or may not provide network needed for VoIP.

Capacity requirements:

- Bandwidth between campuses of at least 9Mbps, ideally scalable to 1 Gbps.
- Prefer QOS option of supporting managed VoIP between campuses using WAN

### **3.1.2 Cellular**

Reliable cell phone service (including voice and text messaging) with strong signal at eligible locations, for up to 12 phones.

Pooled minutes with 600-1000 pooled minutes per phone per month.

Text messaging: 250-500 messages per phone per month.

Service for up to three cell phones with both voice and unlimited Internet service (cross-referenced under Internet access).

### **3.2 Internet Access**

- Internet bandwidth minimum 9 Mbps at each site (upload and download) with 99.9% reliability, ideally scalable to 100 Mbps or more, and down-scalable if conditions require—without contract change
- Service for up to three cell phones with both voice and unlimited Internet service (cross-referenced under Telecommunications).
- DNS services
- 8 public, five usable IP addresses

### **3.3 WAN (see also Telecommunications)**

- Bandwidth between campuses of at least 9 Mbps, ideally scalable to 1 Gbps.
- Prefer QOS option of supporting managed VoIP between campuses using WAN

### **3.4 Internal Connections**

All equipment below is for the 98<sup>th</sup> Street site. Goal is to match equipment types with the Mansfield site to simplify configuration, maintenance, and compatibility.

#### **3.4.1 LAN EQUIPMENT (SWITCHES AND ROUTERS)**

One Cisco-compatible wireless LAN controller

One 4-port 19" rackmount KVM switch with rackmount monitor

One Cisco ASA 5510 firewall (to match existing firewall at Mansfield site).

### 3.4.2 SERVERS

- Up to two DHCP/DNS/Exchange servers using Windows Server 2008, covered by Microsoft Software Assurance Program. Server should have a reliable hard drive system for system reliability and E-Rate-eligible backup capability.
- Specifications: 19” rackmount, 2U or smaller, mirrored 500GB SATA drives, 4 GB RAM expandable to 16 GB, 2.6 GHz Core 2 quad Xenon processor (or better), CALS for 300 users (admin, teacher, student accounts)

### 3.5 Basic Maintenance of Internal Connections

The Applicant requests bids for Basic Maintenance services necessary to support the operation of the eligible Internal Connections network. All E-Rate eligible servers, switches, routers, and hardware are to be maintained through E-Rate eligible maintenance agreements with multi-year options. This will also include the equipment purchased as a result of this RFP, after the applicable equipment warranties expire. In particular, Applicant seeks bids for basic maintenance of local area network infrastructure including switches, routers, firewall, and eligible servers, including installation of appropriate manufacturer-recommended firmware/software upgrades and patches and routine monthly maintenance of all network components. Ensure ongoing system integrity and operation as designed, including minor reconfigurations as needed from time to time, to ongoing ensure reliable data access for all instructional areas.

Applicant seeks solutions involving hourly labor (hourly rate X number of hours per site per month).

Annual contract for regularly scheduled preventive maintenance plus next-business-day repair or replacement is sought for all eligible equipment, to the extent that this is not already included in other bids.

The dates covered by the contract should be July 1 to June 30 and should cover both parts and labor.

#### Categories of Equipment to be Maintained

Wireless access points: Linksys, Netopian, D-Link, Buffalo, and 3com

Switches: D-Link and Cisco

Firewall: Cisco

Servers: Dell Power Edge with Windows 2008 Enterprise software

UPS: SmartOnline

#### **4. Vendor Qualifications**

Due to complexity, potential liability, and the need to protect the Applicant's and the SLD's shared investment in infrastructure and services, Applicant requires the following industry certifications and other evidence of qualifications in order for submitted bids to be considered responsive.

- Vendor must have a valid SLD Service Provider Identification Number [SPIN] and never have been suspended or debarred from the E-Rate program.
- Vendor must have a valid FCC Registration Number.
- Vendors of telecommunications services must be eligible telecommunications providers ("common carriers") as defined by the SLD.
- Vendor must have up-to-date Service Provider Annual Certification [SPAC] filings as required by the SLD.
- Vendor must be a manufacturer-authorized provider of the proposed equipment. (For example, if Cisco equipment is being recommended, provider should be a Cisco network partner.)
- Vendor must provide evidence of successful performance in the installation of the recommended brands of switches, routers, Internet servers, and similar equipment, within the K-12 marketplace during the last 3 years.
- Vendor must have on staff a MCSE + Internet Engineer for any Windows Server projects.
- Vendor must be a Certified Drug Free Workplace.
- Vendor must have all engineers and installers bonded and liability insured.
- Vendor must furnish documentation of all certifications listed herein.
- Vendor must provide a reference list of three existing K-12 E-Rate customers and the nature of the products and services delivered.
- Vendor must provide documentation of prior experience successfully implementing comparably sized, SLD-funded E-Rate projects.
- Suitably qualified engineers must be available to field supervise all installation work. (For example, Vendors of Cisco equipment must provide a Cisco CCNP/ CCIE.)

**Documentation of the above qualifications must be a part of RFP response.**

#### **4.1 Variations and Waivers of Qualifications**

Any variations from any of the above qualifications or other specifications of this RFP should be clearly noted and explained in the bid proposal. Nontrivial variations from the qualifications listed above will be considered sufficient cause for bid disqualification. Applicant shall have the right but not the obligation to consider requests for minor waivers from these requirements, if Applicant in its sole discretion determines this to be in its own best interest, such as in a situation where no other fully compliant bids have been received by the submission deadline or where an otherwise qualified Vendor has applied for but is still awaiting assignment of a SPIN number by the SLD.

**Attachment A**  
**List of Entities Participating in this RFP**

<b>Entity Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>BEN</b>
Bright Star Schools Consortium	5431 W 98 <sup>th</sup> St, Los Angeles, CA 90045	16056685
Bright Star Schools Central Management Office	5431 W 98 <sup>th</sup> St, Los Angeles, CA 90045	16056683
Bright Star Secondary Charter Academy	5431 W 98 <sup>th</sup> St, Los Angeles, CA 90045	16046469
Stella Middle Charter Academy	2636 S Mansfield Ave. Los Angeles, CA 90016	16035321
Stella Middle Charter Academy at 98th St	5431 W 98 <sup>th</sup> St, Los Angeles, CA 90045	16056877