

memo

Appleton Public Library

To: Appleton Public Library Board of Trustees
From: Tasha Saecker, Assistant Director
Date: 7/10/2023
Re: Recommendation of an E-Rate Consultant

The federal E-Rate program offers discounts to schools and libraries on their internet access services and data communication needs. The program is a reimbursement process that involves filing specific federal forms to select a vendor from those who bid on the project. Reimbursement levels are based on the number of students eligible for the National School Lunch Program in the local school district. Our reimbursement rate will be 60%.

We will be focusing our reimbursement on the new library project, planning to do two bid processes: one for switches, routers, access points and other eligible equipment and the other for data wiring and installation in the new library.

I am recommending that we work with a consultant due to the size and complexity of the project and the bid process. The consultant will work to make sure that the timing of our request and reimbursement work with both the e-rate rules and our overall project timeline. They will help us maximize what we can receive, file the federal forms, establish criteria for vendor review, assist with contracts, and file the reimbursement paperwork after the expenditures are made.

After reaching out to three e-rate consultants recommended by library systems in the state, we have received one proposal from E-Rate Advantage. I am confident in recommending them as our choice for consultant as they work with 500 clients across the country and have been in business for over 17 years with a success rate of 98%. Their fee will be 6% of the overall e-rate project, placing it in the \$20,000 to \$30,000 range depending on how much we are able to apply towards e-rate reimbursement.