

**Broadband Florida Q1 2014 PPR Report Details
Project Attachment – Technical Assistance (E-rate)**

Question 2. Describe your progress meeting each major activity/milestone approved in the Project Plan for this project; any challenges or obstacles encountered and mitigation strategies you have employed; planned major activities for the next quarter; and any additional project milestones or information.

The E-rate Assistance Team continued to provide outreach, assistance, and training to Florida schools and libraries throughout the quarter in addition to conducting research and analysis of factors affecting success rates in the program.

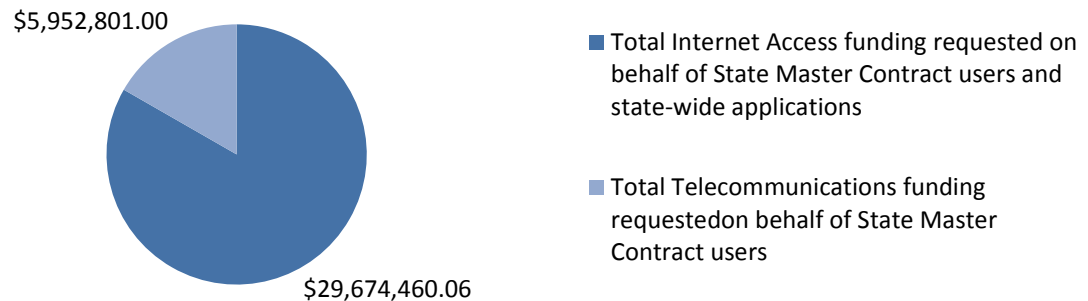
During the first quarter of 2014, the E-rate Assistance Team continued to provide information and clarification to the staff at the Universal Service Administration Company (USAC) related to funding year 2013-14 E-rate applications Program Integrity Assurance (PIA) review and selective review. The team worked with internal IT staff to implement a Communications Service Authorization and Billing (CSAB) system that accommodates E-rate ordering, application, and billing requirements as part of the E-rate filing procedure for the funding year 2014-15. Using the new system and working with Department of Management Services (DMS) E-rate customers, the team filed 100 individual applications and one statewide consortium application during the window, which closed on March 26, 2013.

During the upcoming quarter, the team will be responding to USAC inquiries regarding the funding year 2014-15 applications it filed and also will be assisting schools and libraries who filed their own applications to respond to USAC application review inquiries. The team will conduct site visits to provide one-on-one training and assistance, learn about how the schools and libraries are using E-Rate support, and determine current and future education technology challenges. The team will continue to work on other projects jointly with DMS and other agencies.

Funding Year 2014-15 State Master Contract Filing Process

During the funding year 2014-15 filing window, the E-rate Assistance Team filed 100 applications on behalf of Florida schools and libraries using State Master Contract (SMC) services, totaling \$9,134,987.16. The 100 applications included 171 individual funding requests. In response to pending legislative mandate and with Department of Education (DOE) support, the team filed a statewide consortium E-rate application to support increased district bandwidth requirements for 3467 K-12 schools across 68 Florida K-12 school districts, totaling \$26,492,273.85.

Funding Year 2014-15 Applications Filed on Behalf of Florida Schools & Libraries



Applications filed on behalf of Florida included the following totals:

Total combined funding requests, including SMC and statewide applications - \$35,627,261.01

Total Internet Access requests, including SMC and statewide applications - \$29,674,460.06

Total Internet Access funding requests, including only SMC applications - \$3,182,186.16

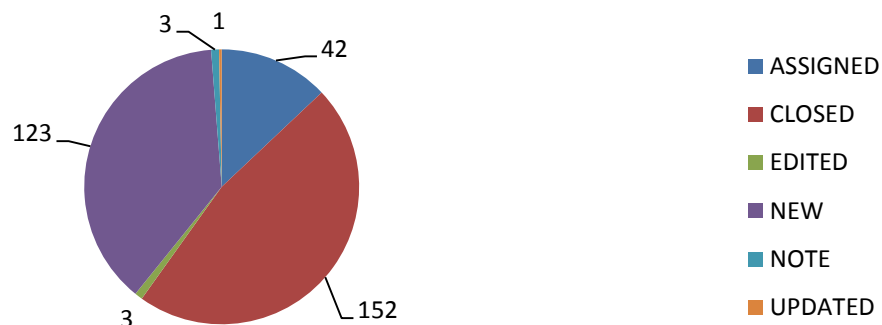
Total Telecommunications funding requested - \$5,952,801.00

Funding Year 2013-14 State Master Contract Filing Process

The E-Rate Assistance Team continued to receive clarification requests from USAC staff related to 90 PIA reviews and an agency-wide selective review concentrating on 15 State Master Contracts. DMS continued receiving Funding Commitment Decision Letters and the subsequent applicant outreach for the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Form 486 filing process. The team collaborated with internal Department teams on internal billing and USAC invoicing procedures. The team began collecting invoicing information and filing Billed Entity Applicant Reimbursement (BEAR) forms on behalf of Florida schools and libraries.

Applicant Outreach

Inquiries via the Customer Relationship Portal



Inquiries via the Customer Relationship Portal

A total of 324 new cases were generated during the first quarter of 2014. Of those cases, all were reviewed by the team and action taken according to priority and message content. Actions taken

include 42 cases assigned to a staff member, seven show updates, edits or notes added, and 152 cases resolved and closed. All other cases remain open pending responses and further staff review. Topics addressed in inquiries included:

- Responses to second seven-Day notice correspondence from Schools & Libraries reviewers
- Issues that arose during selective, special compliance & PIA reviews, such as National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and entity verification and DMS contract questions
- Due date reminders to applicants
- Filed FCC Form confirmation notices
- Program information questions from Florida schools and libraries, which covered:
 - Technology plan certification
 - Eligible entity & discount verifications
 - Invoicing questions (Prediscount Cost Calculation Grid or BEAR forms)
 - Form 486 filing questions and responses
 - E-Rate questions on procurement and FCC Form 471 applications for funding year 2014-15
 - Registration questions regarding upcoming E-rate team training events
 - Use and operation of the new CSAB system by State Master Contract customers

The E-Rate Assistance Team continued its statewide outreach by issuing periodic reminders to advise E-Rate stakeholders of upcoming program deadlines, eligibility updates and best filing practices. Weekly E-Rate LISTSERV notifications of funding status were monitored and tracked by the team.

- E-Rate funding year 2012-13: The team continues to track USAC funding waves. The recent funding waves 73-81 did not apply to Florida schools and libraries (statewide) with 8 applications still pending for some entities in Florida.
- E-Rate funding year 2013-14: The team tracked USAC funding waves 33-48, which totaled over \$33.45M in funding and 213 funding requests for Florida schools and libraries (statewide).

Outreach to Other Stakeholder State Agencies

Department of Education

The team continues to work with the Florida DOE staff directly responsible for NSLP statistics and technology plan review and approval. During the first quarter in 2014, DMS continued to function as a liaison between USAC and DOE regarding PIA questions pertaining to eligible entities and NSLP information.

The E-Rate Assistance Team and other DMS staff continued an ongoing series of meetings with DOE representatives to discuss school bandwidth needs related to upcoming mandates regarding online student assessment and e-Book requirements. As part of that effort, E-Rate staff continues to respond to Florida Legislature requests for E-Rate information and analysis.

Outreach Within the Department of Management Services

The E-Rate team continues to work hand-in-hand with DMS product managers to ensure E-Rate program compliance during DMS procurement processes and resulting contracts. During the first quarter in

2014, the team continued to advise DMS staff on procurements for services such as local & long distance telephone services, broadband contract amendments, and data service offerings. The team assisted in coordinating collection of data and documents requested by USAC.

The team also continues to work with DMS Billing and Product Management groups for the annual reconciliation of all broadband contract billing that is undertaken with the service providers. The team fields questions regarding the USAC Service Provider Invoice and BEAR invoicing processes. The team also continues to work with internal DMS staff to design and execute billing and USAC invoicing processes for State Master Contract customers.

Other E-rate Assistance Team Outreach Efforts

The team issued weekly E-rate related bulletins via a customized LISTSERV and actively participated in weekly issues/news teleconferences with the State E-rate Coordinators' Alliance SECA. It also conducted weekly monitoring of USAC weekly briefs and distributed these bulletins to our constituency as needed via:

- LISTSERV messages
- Individual Phone or Email contact
- Webinar when appropriate
- One-on-one assistance
- Improved outreach and event registration methodology

Training

The team conducted weekly webinars throughout the application window offering guidance to State Master Contract E-rate applicants on updated filing procedures and the new CSAB process management and data collection tool. The team hosted 10 webinar training events with 243 registrations by 111 school and library staff across 75 organizations, as well as five open-topic question and answer sessions during the last month of the filing window. Florida State Master Contract applicants were also offered the opportunity for one-on-one web-based training sessions. Forty five individual training sessions covered topics including using and navigating within the CSAB E-rate Organizer tool, applicant account set-up, and troubleshooting. The team developed documentation including a manual with guidance for using the CSAB tool and training materials showing how the tool operates within the master contract application process.

Conferences

The E-Rate Assistance Team made presentations in two sessions at the Florida Educational Technology Conference on January 28-31, 2014. Topics addressed included general E-Rate program and application information, new State Master Contract filing information, an introduction to the Community Eligibility Option, and the post commitment segment of the DMS master contract filing process for funding year 2013-14 applications.