

- Funding Status – FY 2020
- FCC Releases Draft ESL for FY 2021
- Remote Learning — But from Where?
- E-Rate Updates and Reminders
 - Upcoming E-Rate Dates
 - FFL 2020 Applicant Survey Findings
- USAC News Brief Dated July 24 – ESL, MFA, and Form 470 Reminders

Funding Status – FY 2020

Wave 12 for FY 2020 was released on Thursday, July 23rd for a total of \$39.7 million including \$2.65 million for 9 North Carolina applicants, mostly for NCDPI. Cumulative commitments are \$1.18 billion including \$28.0 million for North Carolina. Nationwide, USAC has now funded over 76% of the FY 2020 applications received during the filing window representing about 41% of the requested funding.

FCC Releases Draft ESL for FY 2021

The FCC released a draft of the Eligible Services List (“ESL”) for FY 2021 ([DA 20-767](#)). As is usually the case, the draft ESL remains virtually unchanged from the previous year, and the comment period is unlikely to engender additional updates. The accompanying Public Notice notes only two minor additions/changes including (a) a reference to the prohibition on the use of equipment and services provided by “covered companies” deemed threats to national security, and (b) updated language on the new Category 2 budget rules for school districts and library systems. Additionally, we found one update on a link to a USAC web resource. Specifically:

Corrected reference

Page 4 old:

Additional guidance from USAC about the E-Rate application process and about eligible services, including a glossary of terms, is available at USAC’s website at <https://www.usac.org/e-rate/resources/glossary-of-terms>

Page 4 revised:

Additional guidance from USAC about the E-Rate application process and about eligible services, including a glossary of terms, is available at USAC’s website at <https://www.usac.org/e-rate/applicant-process/before-you-begin/eligible-services-1>

Category 2 budget change

Page 6 old:

internal connections (e.g., managed internal broadband services or managed Wi-Fi). Category Two support is subject to per-school or per-library budgets as set forth in 47 CFR § 54.5

Page 6 revised:

internal connections (e.g., managed internal broadband services or managed Wi-Fi). Category Two support is subject to district- or library system-wide budgets as set forth in 47 CFR § 54.5

Reference to new ban on Huawei and ZTE

Page 9 new:

Note: Equipment or services produced or provided by a company that the FCC has designated as a national security threat to the integrity of communications networks or the communications supply chain are not eligible for E-Rate support. 47 CFR § 54.9(a).

Comments on the draft ESL are due August 20th; reply comments are due September 4th.

Remote Learning — But from Where?

Up until now, most discussions of remote learning have focused on student access at home. With the pandemic still raging, and the new school year about to start, few schools are planning for a return to fully traditional, in-class instruction. Remote learning in full or in hybrid mode is a more likely scenario for most schools at least through the 2020 fall semester.

Many schools are beginning to realize that whatever may have worked — often with hard work and with impressive success — on a short-term basis last spring, when most students and their parents were quarantined at home, may not work as the economy begins to reopen and parents return to work outside their homes. At-home remote learning may no longer be feasible for many students. If these students can't be in a classroom every day, and must participate remotely, where will that be? Will there be adequate Internet access? And most importantly, will it be safe and supervised?

An answer we're hearing to these questions is often "day care." But traditional day care, focusing on younger children and facing its own COVID-related problems, is unlikely to be the answer for dealing with a flood of older K-12 students requiring properly-distanced workspaces to support full-day remote learning (and support services including supervision, technology, meals, etc.). Putting aside private pandemic "pods," as discussed in a recent [New York Times Op-Ed](#), schools have two basic options.

- In-school remote learning facilities. This seemingly oxymoron-like approach recognizes that while socially-distanced classrooms hold less students, most schools have other larger capacity spaces — gyms, auditoriums, cafeterias, etc. — that could support other students attending classes "remotely" while still being supervised and supported within their schools.
- Non-school remote learning centers. With ongoing pandemic restrictions on social gathering, many large venue facilities — community centers, theaters, convention centers, churches, etc. — remain unused or under-utilized and (with proper staffing) could be used as remote learning centers. Use of such facilities raise financial, technical and potential regulatory issues. In particular:

- Rental (hopefully modest in community-based facilities) and configuration costs must be addressed. CARES 2.0 legislation, with substantial school support remains pending but, if enacted, would hopefully not preclude funding of such facilities.
- WiFi capacity will likely need to be boosted with higher Internet bandwidth, mobile hotspots, and/or additional cloud-managed WAPs.
- To maximize E-rate flexibility, states may wish to formally designate such facilities as schools or annexes at least on an interim basis.

E-Rate Updates and Reminders

Upcoming E-Rate Dates:

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| July 27 | Implementation of multifactor authentication (“MFA”) as a requirement for E-rate applicants to access EPC or the BEAR Form systems through a new “One Portal” (see USAC News Brief referenced below). |
| August 20 | Deadline for submitting initial comments on the FCC’s draft ESL for FY 2021 (DA 20-767) — see article above. Reply comments are due September 4 th . |

FFL 2020 Applicant Survey Findings:

Earlier this summer (see our [newsletter of June 15th](#)) we urged applicants to complete the E-rate survey conducted by Funds For Learning (“FFL”). This was FFL’s tenth annual nationwide survey — a particularly important one coming at a time of expanded need for critical E-rate support. Earlier this month, FFL presented the results of its 2020 survey to FCC staff (see extensive [ex parte report](#)). Key findings of FFL’s survey, with an impressive response rate of 10% of E-rate applicants, included the following:

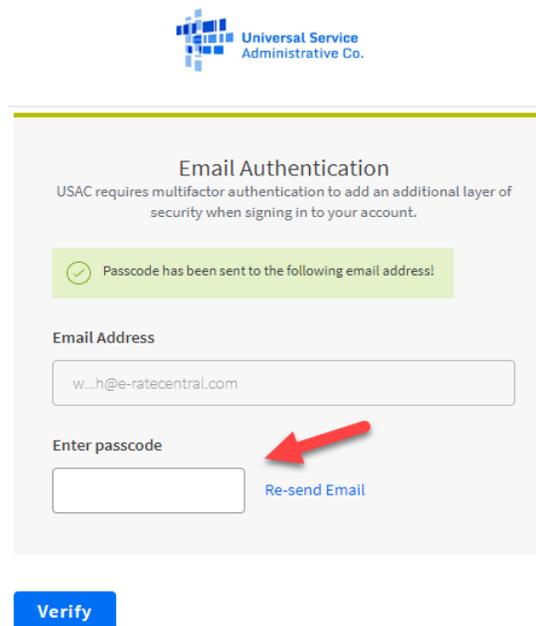
- The E-rate program is succeeding in its mission to provide faster, cost-effective, Internet services to more students and library patrons.
- Additional E-rate support is needed for cybersecurity, redundant Internet access , VoIP services, and school bus WiFi.
- Emergency and ongoing funding is needed to support remote learning.

USAC News Brief Dated July 24 – ESL, MFA, and Form 470 Reminders

[USAC’s Schools and Libraries News Brief of July 24, 2020](#), covers the following three topics:

1. The FCC’s release of the draft Eligible Services List (“ESL”) for FY 2021 (discussed in more detail above).
2. This past weekend’s implementation of a new multifactor authentication (“MFA”) process to enable applicant access to USAC’s EPC and BEAR Form systems effective today, July 27th (see our [newsletter of July 20th](#)).

To login, a user will first enter their regular username and password. The system will then send the user a temporary security passcode to be entered as shown below.



Universal Service
Administrative Co.

Email Authentication

USAC requires multifactor authentication to add an additional layer of security when signing in to your account.

✓ Passcode has been sent to the following email address!

Email Address

w...h@e-ratecentral.com

Enter passcode

[Re-send Email](#)

Verify

3. Reminders for filing a Form 470 for FY 2021, namely:

- You must file the Form 470 in EPC.
- If you issue a request for proposal (RFP) and/or RFP documents, you must upload these documents to your Form 470.
- Certify the form online in EPC.
- Service providers can view filed Forms 470 either through EPC or on the USAC website.

Newsletter information and disclaimer: This newsletter may contain unofficial information on prospective E-rate developments and/or may reflect E-Rate Central's own interpretations of E-rate practices and regulations. Such information is provided for planning and guidance purposes only. It is not meant, in any way, to supplant official announcements and instructions provided by USAC, the FCC, or NCDPI.

Additional North Carolina specific E-rate information is available through our Web site — <http://www.e-ratecentral.com/us/stateInformation.asp?state=NC>. Note that this site provides easy access to formatted North Carolina applicant E-rate histories via the Billed Entity Number ("BEN") search mechanism in the upper left-hand corner. Detailed information can be obtained by "drilling down" using the links for specific funding years and individual FRNs.

If you have received this newsletter from a colleague and you would like to receive your own copy of the North Carolina E-Rate Forum, send an email to join-ncerate@lists.dpi.state.nc.us. Please include your name, organization, telephone, and e-mail address.

In compliance with federal law, the NC Department of Public Instruction administers all state-operated educational programs, employment activities and admissions without discrimination because of race, religion, national or ethnic origin, color, age, military service, disability, or gender, except where exemption is appropriate and allowed by law.