

Request for Proposals for 2022-2023 E-Rate WAN and Internet Services

Northwest Arctic Borough School District



The Northwest Arctic Borough School District (NWABSD) is soliciting proposals for Wide Area Network (WAN) services or Software-defined WAN (SD-WAN), dedicated (non-contended) internet and shared-class internet services beginning with the E-rate Funding Year 2022 school year: July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023. The District will evaluate proposals for 3-year or 5-year contract terms with single-year renewal options for a maximum term of seven years if all renewals are exercised for either term proposed. All proposals will be carefully evaluated and compared with current service levels and in accordance with the evaluation rubric.

Requests provided herein are minimum specifications. All Respondents must carefully read and abide by the Eligible Services List on the Schools & Libraries Web site: <https://www.usac.org/e-rate/applicant-process/before-you-begin/eligible-services-list/>. **Cost of eligible components of the proposal must be separated from the cost of any ineligible components. All respondents must be capable of providing telecommunication services under the Universal Service Support Mechanism, be a registered vendor with USAC, and have a USAC issued 498 ID (Service Provider Identification Number-SPIN).** Respondents must not be on the RedLight list of the FCC in regard to the Anti-Deficiency Act debts to federal agencies. This document as well as vendor comments, questions, and District responses can be read on the web at www.nwarctic.org/rfp.

Failure to comply with these provisions will result in a proposal being deemed non-responsive.

An authorized official of your firm is required to sign the fully completed proposal.

Request for Proposal Schedule:

Release of District's Formal RFP	December 8, 2021
File Form 470	December 8, 2021
Questions Due	December 29, 2021
Responses Available	January 5, 2022
Proposals Due by	February 8, 2022, 4:30 pm local time
Open Proposals and Evaluate Proposals	February 9, 2022
Notice of Intent to Award	February 14, 2022

The District's current services expire on June 30, 2022, therefore the new service is expected to begin on July 1, 2022.

The request for proposal implies no obligation on the part of the District.

The District reserves the right to:

- **Cancel this RFP or reissue the RFP if deemed in the best interest of the District.**
- **Request clarification of a respondent's proposal or to supply any such material necessary to assist in the evaluation of respondents.**
- **Modify or otherwise alter any of the terms, conditions, or specifications of the request for proposal if it is in the best interest of the School District while allowing all respondents**

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equal opportunity to proposal again which will be noted as an RFP “addendum” in USAC’s public tool.

- Refuse or reject any and all proposals received and waive deviations from the terms of the request for proposal if the District determines that the deviations are not material in accordance with local, State and FCC rules.

Required Notice to Proceed and Funding Availability

Northwest Arctic Borough School District will follow the purchasing policies of the Northwest Arctic Borough School District Board and requirements and procedures of the FCC’s E-rate program as administered by the Universal Service Administrative Company to be eligible for all available funding.

The implementation of any associated contracts resulting from this competitive proposal process will be dependent on the district’s issuance of a written Notice to Proceed. E-rate funding notification alone will not signify Notice to Proceed. The District will have the right to allow the contract to expire without implementation if appropriate funding does not come available. Proposed respondent contract language must explicitly state that the terms of the agreement shall be contingent upon the state and federal funding available to the District.

SPECIFICATIONS of the Proposal

WAN or SD-WAN:

All Kotzebue sites (District Office, KMHS, JNES, ATC, ATC Dorms, STAR Dorms) on a single WAN or SD-WAN.

1 WAN or SD-WAN circuit from each entity (Shungnak, Kobuk, Ambler, Selawik, Noorvik, Kiana, Deering, Buckland, Kivalina, New Kivalina school, Noatak) to Kotzebue District Office WAN or SD-WAN (at least 3/3 Mbps or comparable).

Proposals must include the option to increase sites-Kotzebue WAN or SD-WAN circuits to at least 5/5 Mbps.

Internet Service:

The District seeks a broadband Internet solution to each of the 17 district entities with the following minimum bandwidth capabilities:

Kotzebue Circuits for 6 Entities

Northwest Arctic Borough School District is requesting proposals for leased lit fiber for delivery of Internet services to the Kotzebue Circuits. The current Internet services are provided by terrestrial but enhanced fiber services are now required to support rapidly growing bandwidth needs and to meet the State Education Technology Directors Association standard recognized in the FCC Second E-rate Modernization order as the benchmark standard for bandwidth for school districts. An inability to provide a proposal for leased lit fiber will NOT disqualify any potential respondents.

- | |
|---|
| 1 circuit for the District Office to Internet (at least 100/100 Mbps) |
| 1 circuit for Kotzebue Middle High School to Internet (at least 25/25 Mbps) |
| 1 circuit for June Nelson Elementary School to Internet (at least 25/25 Mbps) |

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- 1 circuit for Alaska Technical Center (ATC) to Internet (at least 10/10 Mbps)
- 1 circuit for ATC Dorms to Internet (at least 5/5 Mbps)
- 1 circuit for Star of Northwest Magnet School Dorms to Internet (at least 5/5 Mbps)

Each circuit must be clearly marked to reflect the mode of delivery (satellite, low orbiting satellite, leased lit fiber, terrestrial, etc.)

Dedicated circuits must be clearly marked in the proposal

Circuits for 11 Entities (Ambler, Buckland, Deering, Kiana, Kivalina, Kobuk, Noatak, Noorvik, Selawik, Shungnak)

Requirements per site:

- 1 circuit from Ambler to Internet (at least 25/4 Mbps)
- 1 circuit from Buckland to Internet (at least 25/4 Mbps)
- 1 circuit from Deering to Internet (at least 25/4 Mbps)
- 1 circuit from Kiana to Internet (at least 25/4 Mbps)
- 1 circuit from Kivalina to Internet (at least 25/4 Mbps) *
- 1 circuit from New Kivalina School to Internet (at least 25/4 Mbps) *

- 1 circuit from Kobuk to Internet (at least 25/4 Mbps)
- 1 circuit from Noatak to Internet (at least 25/4 Mbps)
- 1 circuit from Noorvik to Internet (at least 25/4 Mbps)
- 1 circuit from Selawik to Internet (at least 25/4 Mbps)
- 1 circuit from Shungnak to Internet (at least 25/4 Mbps)

*Note: The Kivalina School has a new location which is currently being built. This is going to be a new school replacing the Kivalina School however, the State will be deeming this a new entity. It is anticipated that there will be a soft-transition where both schools will need service which will support different student population at that time. The respondent must agree to terminate services to the pre-existing Kivalina School without penalty when the school officially closes.

The completion date is not yet known but is expected to occur during the school year. The new location at approximately 67.80558, -164.37819. See Appendix A for map.

Each circuit must be clearly marked to reflect the mode of delivery (satellite, low orbiting satellite, leased lit fiber, terrestrial, etc.)

Dedicated circuits must be clearly marked in the proposal

Additional Requirements

Proposal must include:

Option to increase ALL Internet circuits by at least 50/4 Mbps

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Internet service proposals should be comprehensive and include all necessary hardware, software, infrastructure, etc. to provide a turnkey, end-to-end Internet solution.

Internet proposals should include, as a separate item, costs associated with content filtering. Although not eligible for E-Rate funding, the district is seeking proposals for such service. An inability to provide a proposal on content filtering will NOT disqualify and potential respondents.

The District is seeking low latency circuits for all school locations. Respondents bidding satellite circuits, must clearly indicate this and include the option to switch over to a lower latency option at a future point in time. Growing educational demands require the district to reduce latency due to satellite circuits. An inability to provide non-satellite circuits will NOT disqualify any potential respondents.

Demonstrations:

Respondents proposing to temporarily loan equipment/services for product demonstration and/or evaluation purposes (at the sole cost of the respondent including delivery and pickup) are required to clearly state that such loans are of limited duration. The District will not demo any equipment/services in excess of thirty days.

Service Level Agreement:

The respondent will provide a proposed Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the RFP response. The proposal must include a description of the following services and how these services will be measured.

- Fiber Network Availability: the provider will make all reasonable efforts to ensure 99.99% network availability of each circuit.
- .25% frame/packet loss commitment
- 25ms network latency commitment
- 10ms network jitter commitment
- There is no right of provider to limit or throttle the capacity of the circuit at any time for any reason

In addition to the required services, the proposal may include but is not to be limited to the following services:

- Network operations center: Solution will provide customer support functions including problem tracking, resolution and escalation support management on a 24x7x365 basis. Customer has the right and is encouraged to call concerning any problems that may arise relative to its connection with vendor provided services.
- Trouble reporting and response: Upon interruption, degradation or loss of service, Customer may contact Vendor by defined method with a response based on trouble level. Upon contact from the Customer, the Vendor support team will initiate an immediate response to resolve any Customer issue. Customer will receive rapid feedback on trouble resolution, including potential

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All items, other than those indicated as not eligible for E-Rate support, need to be proposal in order for the proposal response to be considered responsive.

Proposal Evaluations and Selections Process:

NWABSD will only accept and evaluate proposals that meet the requirements listed in this document. Any proposal that cannot meet these requirements will be considered non-responsive.

The Northwest Arctic Borough School District shall determine the responsibility of the respondent based upon the respondent's (1) adherence to proposal specifications, (2) proposed terms of delivery, (3) compliance with state and local laws, (4) performance record with the NWABSD or other School Districts in Alaska, (5) financial capability, and (6) compliance with conditions and specifications imposed in the solicitation.

Award of the Bid shall be made by the Northwest Arctic Borough School Board to the most cost-effective respondent with the highest score on the attached Evaluation Rubric and upon the approval of said Board.

NWABSD expressly reserves the right to waive minor informalities. "Minor informalities" means matter of form rather than substance or are insignificant matters that have a negligible impact on the proposal and can be waived or corrected without prejudice to other respondents. Further the District reserves the right to:

- Request clarification of a respondent's proposal or to supply any such material necessary to assist in the evaluation of respondents.
- Modify or otherwise alter any of the terms, conditions, or specifications of the request for proposal if it is in the best interest of the School District while allowing all respondents equal opportunity to proposal again.
- Refuse or reject any and all proposals received and to waive deviations from the terms of the request for proposal if the District determines that the deviations are not material.

Notice of Non-Discrimination:

No respondent or any District contract may discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, marital status, handicap, or change in marital status, in employment, provision of service or otherwise. The successful respondent shall take affirmative action to ensure such nondiscrimination. The successful respondent must agree to post in conspicuous places, available to employees and applicants for employment, notice setting forth the provisions of nondiscrimination section. This section shall be deemed to be part of every contract entered into by NWABSD.

NOTE: All comments and questions of a technical nature can be addressed to the Director of Technology (Amy Eakin) by email at aeakin@nwarctic.org, cc: Eric Flock at bidsny@e-ratecentral.com and should use the subject line: **NWABSD WAN and IA 2022-2023**.

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NWABSD RFP Evaluation Rubric:

Proposals will be evaluated and ranked on the basis of the following criteria.
(100 Point scale)

Provider: _____

Service Proposed by Respondent:

1. Charge/Cost: Weight 20 Points
Evaluate the E-rate eligible monthly recurring and non-recurring charges and installation fees. Proposal clearly outlines all costs to be incurred in the project. Cost is a fixed proposal or has clearly identifiable rates with realistic estimates of time on task proposal response is cost effective.

Total cost of ownership over the lifespan of the base contract
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20

Circle Score:
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20

2. Latency Weight 15 Points
Rank providers based on number of low latency non-satellite circuits they can provide to the district. Vendors that provide only satellite circuits will automatically receive 1 point only. The district prefers links delivered via lit fiber and terrestrial means due to the substantial reduction in latency.

Scoring:

Highest = 15 points 2 nd Lowest = 10 points 3 rd Lowest = 5 points	Bids with all Satellite circuits / others = 1 point
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Circle Score: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15

3. WAN (or comparable Internet services): Weight 15 Points
Proposal includes a detailed description of services to be provided and any constraints as to procedure, time, personnel, equipment, etc., that need to be communicated to the district for use during contract negotiations. Includes an overview of the respondent's organization and processes that have bearing on the proposed project.

Circle Score: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15

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4. Billing Preference

Weight 10 Points

Respondent explicitly states they are willing and able to invoice USAC directly via Form 474 (Service Provider Invoicing Form) and will not require the District to file Form 472 (Billed Entity Applicant Reimbursement Form).

Circle Score: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5. Service and Support:

Weight 10 Points

Proposal describes the access and application services provided. Identifies the service levels included in the access. (Application services include content filtering, security, caching, and additional features). Ongoing technical support is identified with cost analysis for additional programming, design, changes and technical support that may be needed. The proposal outlines the type of support services available, hours of staffing availability, onsite staffing availability and technical level.

Overall ongoing technical support service	1	2	3	4	5
Hours of staffing / onsite availability	1	2	3	4	5

Circle Score: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6. Design and Technical Execution:

Weight 10 Points

Proposal includes information about the design’s technical ability to provide an effective and cost-efficient solution. Describes in detail all hardware and software specifications including the capabilities of on-site and off-site hardware and software options. Includes resources available to complete the project and any concepts or innovations in design that have proven effective in the past that would be applicable to this project.

Technical Design / Innovation	1	2	3	4	5
Equipment Capabilities	1	2	3	4	5

Circle Score: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

7. Project Understanding:

Weight 5 Points

Proposal addresses the project in terms of scope of work and substantive issues essential to proper execution of the work. Project proposal demonstrates a clear understanding of the needs and functionalities of educational institutions and the differences and similarities as compared to non-educational entities. Conforms to the requirements of the RFP.

Circle Score: 1 2 3 4 5

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8. Experience and References:

Weight 5 Points

Proposal demonstrates the respondent's ability to deliver comparable services to similarly sized customers with parallel needs and three references from similar customers. Information provided includes resumes of key personnel who would have major responsibility for performance of the services required. Individual's professional registration (as applicable demonstrated).

Circle Score: 1 2 3 4 5

9. Methodology, Installation and Delivery date:

Weight 5 Points

Proposal includes a detailed description of services to be provided and any constraints as to procedure, time, personnel, equipment, etc., that need to be communicated to the district for use during contract negotiations. Includes an overview of the respondent's organization and processes that have bearing on the proposed project. Proposal defines the operational delivery as the date of acceptance of the proposed project, whether in whole or as a schedule of deliverables.

Circle Score: 1 2 3 4 5

10. Extra expense required to be incurred by Northwest Arctic Borough School District:

Weight 5 Points

Extra expense Northwest Arctic Borough School District is required to pay for items deemed ineligible for E-Rate e.g. content filtering but required for the operation of the systems on which the proposal is proposed. (Lesser amount of additional expense to the District will receive the higher score)

Circle Score: 1 2 3 4 5

Proposal Score:

1. _____ point(s) out of 20 possible points
2. _____ point(s) out of 15 possible points
3. _____ point(s) out of 15 possible points
4. _____ point(s) out of 10 possible points
5. _____ point(s) out of 10 possible points
6. _____ point(s) out of 10 possible points
7. _____ point(s) out of 5 possible points
8. _____ point(s) out of 5 possible points
9. _____ point(s) out of 5 possible points
10. _____ point(s) out of 5 possible points

_____ Total points out of 100 possible points

Evaluator Signature: _____ Date: _____

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APPENDIX B **Site Addresses**

Entity Name	Entity Number	Street Address	City	Zip Code
Alaska Technical Center	16026861	843 4th St	Kotzebue	99752
Alaska Technical Center Dorm (Ineligible)	Annex	839 Alice St	Kotzebue	99752
Ambler School	117576	109 Ambler Drive	Ambler	99786
Buckland School	117502	9900 University Drive	Buckland	99727
Deering School	117506	36 Main St	Deering	99736
June Nelson Elementary School	17011718	772 Third Ave	Kotzebue	99752
Kiana School	117529	190 Casanoff St	Kiana	99749
Kobuk School	117533	101 Musers Way	Kobuk	99751
Kotzebue Middle High School	203391	775 Third Ave	Kotzebue	99752
Mcqueen (Kivalina) School	117532	#6 Oceanside Expressway	Kivalina	99750
Napaaqtugmiut (Noatak) School	117544	#2 Airport Road	Noatak	99761
New Kivalina School	To be assigned	50 K Hill Quarry Road	Kivalina	99750
Noorvik School	117551	165 Fireweed Drive	Noorvik	99763
Northwest Arctic Admin	16026859	776 Third Ave	Kotzebue	99752
Selawik Davis-Ramoth School	117559	2600 Musk Ox Parkway	Selawik	99770
Shungnak School	117563	#6 West River Road	Shungnak	99773
Star Of The Northwest Magnet Dorms (Ineligible)	17017902	Adjacent to 839 Alice St	Kotzebue	99752

Note: Separate services are requested for independent sites NW Arctic Administration, June Nelson Elementary School and Kotzebue Middle High School which are housed in the same building.