

EORC Meeting Minutes

December 12, 2023

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Campbell called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m.

Present: Chris Campbell, Chairman; Seth Deniston, Dean Reich, Norm Stewart, Dave Carson, Dan Smith and Stephanie Bailey-White.

Absent: Scott Woolstenhulme

Others Present: Jo Ann Bujarski, Office of the State Board of Education (OSBE), Jon Steele, OSBE; Daniel Vogt, OSBE, Doug Baker Idaho Commission for Libraries.

The agenda was approved by unanimous consent.

Mr. Smith made a motion to approve the minutes of June 13, 2023. Mr. Carson seconded, motion carried.

Chairman Campbell introduced Norm Stewart, new member of the Committee, representing small schools.

Chairman Campbell introduced Dean Reich, new member of the Committee, designee of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Mr. Smith made a motion to elect Seth Deniston as Vice Chairman. Mr. Carson seconded, motion carried.

LIBRARY UPDATE:

Mr. Baker said there are more libraries participating in E-Rate funding. Costs per Mbps are dropping substantially. Some libraries, however, get their broadband through their cities at a nominal cost so there is no reason to participate.

SCHOOLS UPDATE:

The Broadband Program collects bandwidth utilization data from the LEAs. This allows OSBE employees to monitor the school's usage and determine if more or less bandwidth is needed. Some vendors report usage directly to the Broadband Program each month and we are working on getting more vendors to report.

There are 172 out of 190 LEAs participating in the broadband program.

School Appeals/Corrections:

- Notus School District
Notus School District recently signed a five-year contract for internet for \$2350/month. Since the monthly charges are over the automatic reimbursement threshold for LEAs of up to 499 users, (which is \$2000/month) the bidding process and contracts were looked into more closely. There was some confusion at the school district on specific terminology in the contract.

There was a discussion on different ways to let the LEAs know there are technical people available to assist with understanding of the contract terminology. Mr. Vogt said there will be a presentation at the Idaho Association of School Business Officials (IASBO).

Mr. Deniston made a motion to reimburse Notus SD equal to the non-E-Rate capped amount of \$2,000/month. Ms. Bailey-White seconded the motion. Motion carried.

- North Star Charter
North Star Charter did not receive an E-Rate commitment for Funding Year 2023. The school completed E-Rate forms for Category 2 funding but not Category 1 due to miscommunication between Broadband Program and North Star Charter.

Their leadership realized the error shortly after the window for 471 submissions closed and asked for OSBE staff help. Similar issues with other schools had been remedied at that time with an FCC appeal, but this appeal was rejected.

Mr. Reich made a motion to approve 100% of the E-Rate eligible monthly recurring costs for this year. North Star had made a good-faith effort. However, in the future, North Star needs to ensure income surveys are sent to students' homes. Mr. Stewart seconded, motion carried.

GENERAL DISCUSSION:

In the future, the Committee would like conversations around:

- More outreach/training for LEAs
- Digital equity/broadband
- Individual library connections
- Costs in rural areas vs urban areas and ways to possibly lower the costs for rural LEAs.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Carson made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Bailey-White seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 2:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Jo Ann Bujarski