



Brownsville Independent School District

Agenda Category: Bids/Proposals Board of Education Meeting: 03/02/2022

Item Title: CSP #22-094 Internet Services X Action
District-Wide (E-Rate 22) Information
Discussion

BACKGROUND:

The E-Rate 22 (2022) grant application requires that applicants select a vendor for the purchase of eligible services. Under Federal Communication Commission / E-Rate rules, funding is available for Internet access that transmits information as part of a gateway from an information service to the requesting entity. "Internet Access" provides access to the world-wide information resource of the Internet, and includes services such as Domain Name Services and Dynamic Host Configuration Protocol.

CSP#22-094 Internet Services produced 3 proposals of which administration recommends Foremost Communications and Smartcom Telecommunications for Internet Access District-Wide. All submittals meet all requirements of the competitive sealed proposal.

Three proposals were received.

Amount expended for the previous 12 months: Approximately \$811,260.00

Amount projected to be expended for the next 12 months \$964,572.00

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

Not to exceed approved budgeted Local and Categorical Funding.

The Brownsville Independent School District will provide 100% of the cost of which the E-Rate grant will reimburse 90% of the cost to the district for the 2022-2023 school year.

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommend approval CSP #22-094 Internet Services District-Wide (E-Rate 22) to Foremost Telecommunication, Dallas, TX and Smartcom Telephone, Mcallen, TX for a three (3) year term ending June 30, 2025 at an approximate cost of \$964,572.00 per year of service. (Annual Proposal)

Todd Nichols / Rosario Peña Approved for Submission to Board of Education:
Submitted by: Principal/Purchasing Director

David Robledo
Recommended by: Asst. Supt./CFO

Dr. Nellie Cantu / Dr. René Gutiérrez
Approved by: Deputy Superintendent Superintendent

2/18/22

When Necessary, Additional Background May Follow This.

Background

The E-Rate was created by Congress in the Telecommunications Act of 1996 to make telecommunications affordable for every K12 schools and public library in the nation. The program provides discounts toward the purchase of telecommunications services, equipment, Internet access and internal wiring. The non-profit Schools and Libraries Corporation (SLC) administers the E-rate under the direction of the Federal Communications Commission. The program is funded through service fees added to personal and business telephone charges.

Eligibility for Discounts

Discounts range from 20% to 90%, depending on economic need. The level of discount is based upon the percentage of students eligible for participation in the federal free and reduced price school lunch program. BISD has 75%-100% of students eligible for the National School Lunch Program, so the district is eligible for approximately 85% discount.

Approved Products & Services

This is a listing of some, but not all of the eligible products and services:

- Internet Access
- Telecommunications Wiring
- Leased Data Circuits
- Leased Dark Fiber
- Routers, Switches, Firewalls

The primary purpose of the services for which discounts are sought must be the delivery of services into classrooms or other places of instruction. Limited support for administrative functions is permitted. The list of approved products and services has changed in the past 12 – 18 months, and could change in future months.

The Application Process

1. **Develop a technology plan:** A 3-year plan was approved by the Texas Education Agency and is on file. This was confirmed by Texas Education Agency.
2. **Submit FCC Form 470:** This form, which describes the goods and services requested, was filed in November of 2021.
3. **Solicit quotations:** The district direction is primarily to rely upon CSP as issued from our Purchasing Department for the districts needs and funding.
4. **Award contracts, at least 28 days after submitting form 470:** This is the purpose of this particular agenda item.
5. **Submit FCC form 471:** This notifies the SLD (Schools and Library Division) that the district has selected service providers/vendors who have been awarded the contracts.
6. **Wait for a funding commitment letter:** Notification is expected on or about July 1st of any funding year.
7. **Receive Services & file form 486:** All services must be complete by June 30th of any funding year.
8. **BISD pays 100% to the CSP approved vendor:** Our percentage discount will be reimbursed back to the BISD by the USAC program.

Deadlines

The SLD established a “calendar window” during which applications must be submitted, in order to qualify for the 2022-2023 fiscal period. That “window” usually closes in March, 2022. In order to be eligible, BISD must complete steps 1 through 5 by that date. The district anticipates completing all of the filing requirements well within the “window”.

Vendor Participation

The proposed purchases regarding this agenda item are subject to state and federal competitive bidding processes. The Brownsville Independent School District intends to purchase all items subject to state and local procurement laws through the CSP process.

Company	Submitted Proposal
ATT	X
Foremost Communications	X
Smartcom Telecommunications	X

Recommended Vendor

The process this year would be from the local Competitive Sealed Proposal process. The quotation requested was of “Internet Services”.

The district is recommending that the projects related to this agenda item be awarded to Multiple Vendors because the project(s) total cost of all projects comes to a point to where it's advantageous to the district, as well as, to be compliant to the rules, regulations, and procedures regarding ARIN (American Registry for Internet Numbers).

Vendor	Transport Cost	Monthly Cost	Yearly Cost	Internet Cost	Installation Cost	Yearly Cost	Estimated Total Cost of all locations
ATT	\$784.00	\$53,312.00	\$639,744.00	No BID	\$0.00	N/A	\$639,744.00
Foremost*	\$344.00	\$25,675.00	\$280,704.00	\$5,995.00	\$0.00	\$71,940.00	\$352,644.00**
Smartcom*	\$489.00	\$32,435.00	\$399,024.00	\$6,495.00 x 2	\$0.00	\$155,880.00	\$554,904.00**

Vendor				Dark Fiber Cost	Installation Cost	Yearly Cost	Estimated Total Cost
ATT				No Bid	\$0.00	0.00	0.00
Foremost				No Cost	\$0.00	0.00	0.00
Smartcom*				\$4,752.00	\$0.00	\$57,024.00	\$57,024.00**

*Recommended Vendor(s)

** Annual Estimated Total Cost - \$964,572.00

- Due to this CSP relying upon federal funding and due to the fact that grant submittal date is in March and grant start date is July 1st, administration is requesting permission to adjust pricing from individual vendors so not to exceed approved budgeted Local and Categorical Funding.

For the purposes of continuity within the scope of work, the Brownsville Independent School District reserves the right to select the multiple vendors above for the purposes of multiple paths to the internet. This type of selection provides quotes for the projects that result in the best value for the district. We believe that the decision of the BISD to award these quotations to the multiple vendors above as advantageous to the district. We ask for board approval to enter into multi-year contracts as the pricing is advantageous to the district.

Budget Implications

The district will be responsible for the payment of 100 % of the total project proposal of local maintenance funds for the overall project. These funds will be encumbered through local maintenance funds. Once awarded, the E-Rate program will reimburse funding applicable to the BISD discount rate of the internet services for BISD until such time as USAC phases out this category of service.