

# Request for Proposal

## 2024-2025 E-Rate Fiber Core Switch Project

### Tate County School District

#### **NOTICE TO BIDDERS**

Notice is hereby given to interested bidders that the Tate County School District will receive written, sealed bids until the hour of 8:30 a.m. on Monday, March 4th, 2024, at the Tate County School District Central office at 574 Parkway, Coldwater, MS. Bids will be opened at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, March 4th, 2024 in the Boardroom or other designated area of the Tate County School District Central Office.

#### **2024-2025 Fiber Core Switch Project**

The Tate County School District wishes to replace a switch infrastructure at the District Office in Coldwater and four school locations to keep the Fiber Core Switch infrastructure from becoming a bottleneck for the entire school district in the future.

The proposal must guarantee performance sufficient to fulfill the needs of the Tate County School District as requested within this RFP. After implementation of the successful vendor's proposal, if additional equipment, cabling or labor is needed, the vendor will bear all costs necessary to satisfy the requirements of this RFP. There should be no recurring costs for further functionality.

A single bidder will be chosen to complete this project.

Bids will be due at 8:30 a.m. on Monday, March 4th, 2024. For more information, contact Rogers Smith, Technology Director, by email ([rsmith@tcsdms.org](mailto:rsmith@tcsdms.org)).

#### **CLARIFICATION**

If after the completion of this project, during normal operation of the network, the District discovers that the network upgrades does not meet the criteria set forth in this RFP, then the vendor will be required to do whatever is necessary to meet the specifications with no additional cost to the Tate County School District.

#### **GENERAL**

Provide internal connections as specified herein.

The specifications herein are provided to convey the intent of the systems and upgrades and do not indicate every cable or component necessary for the complete system that the proposing vendor shall provide.

Prices quoted shall be all-inclusive (including all applicable taxes, shipping costs, installation of equipment, training, technical support and trash removal) and represent complete installation and integration with the existing network where necessary. Prices quoted in the vendor's response will remain in effect for a period of twelve (12) months from the time of the contract signing.

Omissions in the proposal of any provision herein described shall not be construed as to relieve the vendor of any responsibility or obligation to the complete and satisfactory delivery, operation and support of any services.

Should the vendor have questions or find discrepancies in, or omissions from this RFP, or shall be in doubt to its meaning, the vendor shall at once notify Tate County School District. All questions should be addressed to Rogers Smith as outlined below. The preferred mode of contact is via email.

Rogers Smith  
Technology Director  
Tate County School District  
574 Parkway  
Coldwater, MS 38618  
[rsmith@tcsdms.org](mailto:rsmith@tcsdms.org)  
662-562-5861 (office)

Questions must be submitted to the email address [rsmith@tcsdms.org](mailto:rsmith@tcsdms.org). If a response is not received within 24 hours, it is the responsibility of the respondent to call Rogers Smith at 662-562-5861 (office) to confirm receipt of the message.

All questions and responses will be posted immediately on the District's E-Rate RFP Procurement page at [www.tatecountyschools.org](http://www.tatecountyschools.org). It is the sole responsibility of the respondent to visit this page prior to bid submission to ensure they have the latest information. Any modifications or clarifications will be posted as an addendum on the Tate County School District website. Addendums may also be requested by email from any respondents after the walkthrough is completed.

### **CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

470 Filed and RFP Publication	January 17th, 2024
USAC Erate Filing Window opens	January 15th, 2024
Walk throughs	January 31th -February 26th, 2024
Sealed bid deadline	March 4th, 2024
USAC Filing Window Closes	March 27th, 2024

### **BID SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS**

Bids will be opened at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, March 4th, 2024, in the boardroom or other designated area in the Tate County School District Central office at 574 Parkway, Coldwater, MS. Non electronic bids must be submitted in a sealed envelope clearly marked as follows:

**“2024-2025 E-Rate Fiber Core Switch Project”**

Envelopes not so marked will remain sealed.

The Tate County School District Board of Trustees or Superintendent reserves the right to reject any and/or all bids and waive any informalities.

The first page showing in the bid submission packet must be Attachment A so the total bid price may be easily seen for the bid tabulation. Failure to comply may result in bid disqualification.

Bids must include the following:

Attachment A Completed and Signed by the bidder.

(THIS PAGE MUST BE THE FIRST PAGE IN THE BID SUBMISSION DOCUMENTATION)

Attachment B Completed.

“Tate County 2024-2025 E-Rate Fiber Core Switch Project” should be clearly marked on the face of the envelope as well as the opening date of Monday, March 4th, 2024.

It is the sole responsibility of the respondents to ensure their responses arrive in a timely manner. Late arrivals will be rejected. The Tate County School District is not responsible for delays of any commercial carrier or delays incurred by the respondents. Oral, telephone, or telegraphic bids will not be considered. Signatures on the proposals shall be in longhand and executed by a principal duly authorized by the vendor to make a contract.

Electronic bids may be made through Central Bidding. [centralbidding.com](http://centralbidding.com)

**Certificate of Responsibility**

- A. Each Bidder submitting a bid in excess of \$50,000 on public projects must show on his bid and on the face of the envelope containing the bid, his Certificate of Responsibility Number, as required by Section 31-3-5 and 31-3-21 (latest edition) Mississippi Code of 1972. If the bid does not exceed the amount of \$50,000 on public projects, a notation stating must appear on the face of the envelope.

When multiple contractors submit a joint venture bid in excess of \$50,000.00 on public projects, a Joint Venture Certificate of Responsibility Number is required on the bid and face of the envelope. If the Joint Venture has not Joint Venture Certificate of Responsibility number, then each member of the Joint Venture must indicate their individual Certificate of Responsibility numbers on the bid and on the face of the envelope.

- B. Each subcontractor who’s Subcontract exceeds \$50,000 on public projects shall have a Certificate of Responsibility Number, as required by Section 31-3-15 and 31-3-21 (latest version), Mississippi Code.

No bid will be opened, considered or accepted unless the above information is given as specified. Sufficient evidence that said Certificate of Responsibility has been issued and is in effect at the time of receiving bids must be submitted when required by the Owner. Likewise, it shall be the responsibility of the Prime Contractor to require a Certificate of Responsibility Number from any subcontractor where applicable.

### **Spreadsheet format parts list for EPC**

Tate County School District requires, in addition to the printed copy, the winning bidder must provide a digital form of the bid that has the parts listed in a format that can be copied and pasted into the EPC portal. A spreadsheet is preferred. This prevents typos and discrepancies from delaying the E-rate process. This is commonly referred to as the "Item 21 attachment."

### **EVALUATION METHODOLOGY**

The Tate County School District Board of Trustees or Superintendent will award a contract based on the vendor submission that best meets the needs of the school system with regard to the current Technology Plan, future growth, RFP specifications, and not necessarily the lowest price even though price will be the priority factor. Due to the nature and diversity of the proposals, a significant amount of time may be required to determine which proposal provides the best option for The District. The possibility is that the best option will involve district purchased equipment that may or may not be E-Rate eligible or may or may not be part of this proposal could significantly delay the evaluation process. The evaluation process will not be complete until The District has determined the best proposal based on all factors.

The following factors will be considered when evaluating responses:

- Price of goods and services.
- Preference will be given for prior positive experience with the Vendor.
- Preference will be given to Mississippi based vendors.
- Preference will be given for vendors proposing the use of AP devices in which the AP manufacturer offers a limited lifetime warranty on the access points and/or switches with next day replacement from manufacturer or vendor.
- Preference will be given for vendors whose product requires no recurring costs for future functionality.

### **Financing**

This project will be funded from E-Rate Funds. This project is subject to funding availability and contingent upon E-Rate funding.

### **Vendor Qualifications**

The Tate County School District may make such investigations as deemed necessary to determine the ability of the bidder or subcontractors or suppliers to perform the work, and the bidder shall furnish to the Tate County School District all such information and data for this purpose as the Tate County School District may request. The Tate County School District reserves the right to reject any bid if the evidence submitted by or investigation of such Bidder fails to satisfy the Tate County School District that such bidder is properly qualified to carry out the obligations of the contract and/or to complete the work contemplated therein within the time required.

The bidder is specifically advised that any person, firm or other party to whom it proposes to award a subcontract or purchase order under this contract must be acceptable to the Tate County School District.

The successful vendor (contractor) must have or be certified with the following:

- Be able to supply all products and services.
- Be an authorized dealer in the State of Mississippi for all products.
- Have current liability insurance and workers compensation insurance (please enclose a copy of each with your bid).
- Provide the documentation of the vendor's wireless, switching and cabling certifications.
- Participate in the mandatory walkthrough. Any bid submitted by a vendor who does not complete the mandatory walkthrough will be returned unopened. There will be no exceptions.

**Disqualification of Bidder**

The Tate County School District reserves the right to award to other than the lower bidder when, in the judgment of the district administration, it is in the best interest of the district to do so. A Bidder may be disqualified for such reasons as:

- A. Bidder's failure to comply with requirements regarding Certificate of Responsibility.
- B. Bidder's failure to sign Bidder's Proposal Form or to otherwise properly complete the Proposal Form.
- C. Bidder's failure to complete the mandatory Pre-bid onsite walkthrough.
- D. Bidder being in litigation with the Tate County School District.
- E. Bidder having defaulted on a previous contract.
- F. Bidder having performed unsatisfactorily on a previous contract, including but not limited to the Bidder's failure to fulfill the warranty obligations of a previous contract with the Tate County School District.
- G. Bidder's failure to include documentation for required certifications and authorizations.

The above is not an inclusive list.

## **OBJECTIVE**

Tate County School District's objective is for vendors to propose a solution to do the following:

- 1) Replace the Fiber Core Switch assembly at the District Office with upgraded models that will prevent future bottlenecks for the entire district. A representative switch model is the HP R9W86A that meets the specifications. Equivalent models are allowed as long as the minimum specs are met. Each switch must have eight (8) 10Gbps capable fiber GBIC/SFP+ modules and two (2) 10 Gbps (minimum) RJ45 GBIC/SFP+ modules included.
- 2) Migrate the existing routing tables from the existing 2920 core switch to the new switches.
- 3) This infrastructure will connect directly to CSpire equipment and vendor must verify that it can communicate with CSpire equipment through fiber. The ability to connect electrically is also preferred but not required.
- 4) The connection to existing TCSD switches will be made by either fiber or electrically.

The routing inside the district is done at the switch level rather than the firewall/router level, so installation will require programming in the routing tables that exist on the present switches.

It is the vendor's responsibility to ensure that the equipment proposed meets the performance specifications of the manufacturer and the previously stated requirements. The Tate County School District will not release the vendor from the performance guarantee required above, because of malfunctions or defects in equipment due to manufacturer error or flaws in the equipment.

Because of the diversity of possible solutions, the Tate County School District is asking for detailed proposals to accomplish the task. Specifications will be general and minimal to allow proposals to be as innovative as possible.

All prospective vendors must complete a district walkthrough or onsite survey in order to be eligible to submit a bid. To schedule a walkthrough or onsite survey, you will need to contact Rogers Smith (see contact information above). Proposals from vendors who do not complete the onsite survey or walkthrough WILL NOT be considered.

Should the bidding propose a solution that does not meet the specifications listed below, the vendor must provide sufficient documentation that the District's objective will be met with their solution. The scope of the work will be Coldwater Attendance Center and Independence High School.

## **Equipment & Installation Specification**

### **Cabling for Access Points (if needed)**

All cable and cabling components including jacks and patch panels used in this proposal will be minimum Category 6 rated if installed by the vendor.

The amount needed will be determined by the vendors proposed number of access points

- Bid must include cabling and all necessary components (patch cables, patch panels, jacks and mounts, crimp ends, etc.).
- Bid must include the cost of labor and installation. Bids also need to have per unit pricing.
- Cabling must be neatly run and connected to the wall via J-hooks in the ceiling and may not lay directly on ceiling tiles.
- When cabling runs outside of the building it must be placed in EMT conduit and attached to walkways.
- Vendors may use existing equipment such as raceways and J hooks if desired.

### **Wireless Infrastructure**

Wireless access points and applicable software:

#### **Access Points**

- Must support 802.11n at 2.4GHz and 5GHz. Must be capable of 802.11ac Wave 2.
- Every school in TCSD Aruba 300 series ceiling or wall mounted access points.
- Preference will be given if the manufacturer offers a limited lifetime warranty.
- Must use enterprise-class radios for maximum RF performance and coverage.
- Must support rogue access point detection and denial of service attack protection.
- Must support management frame protection.
- Must support coverage for legacy 802.11b/g clients.
- Must support client load-balancing across frequencies in mixed client environments.
- Must support multicast video delivery across WLAN.
- Must overcome outside interference (Bluetooth, microwaves, etc.).
- Must support radio resource monitoring, dynamic channel assignment, and interference detection, and radio band steering.
- Bid must include the cost of configuration and installation and 1 hour of training on configuration and maintenance for the Tate County School District's IT Department.
- Bid must include the cost of taking out existing access points. The existing wiring may be used, but if a wall mounted access point (such as the Aruba 205H) is taken out, a suitable plate with Cat6 connections must be installed.
- The Tate County School District uses an Airwave server for management and monitoring the existing wireless network and Aruba access points and switches in the district office. It is preferred that the proposed system be able to utilize the existing server hardware and software. If a proposal cannot use this, then the bid must include the hardware and software needed to replicate this functionality in all locations including the district office.
- Any new wiring that the vendor installs will be of a standard grey color specified by the District.
- Gymnasiums are to be considered an active classroom.

## **Other Considerations**

### **Vendor installed Patch Panels and Cabling**

- Any cables run by the vendor will be terminated into a patch panel on one end and in a wall mounted full box jack on the other. Ceiling terminations can be directly into an RJ45 connector to be plugged straight into an access point.
- If current cables are used, the vendor will be allowed to use the same cable and patch panels regardless of the rating category. Existing cabling, if reused, must be tested and labeled accordingly.
- Wireless systems must have the ability to be centrally managed and to allow for guests to connect to the wireless points. The system must be able to support multiple VLANs and multiple SSIDs.

### **Current Equipment**

#### **Switches**

1. The Tate County School District network is made up of HP 2900 series managed switches. All ports are 1000Mbps minimum. Some locations have 10Gbps capability.
2. Any VLAN configurations proposed in this project necessary to meet the requirements must be configured completely by the vendor using the existing switches. The Tate County School District uses a relatively flat network and will provide any needed information to the vendor to comply with existing infrastructure.
3. All fiber connections are type LC. All new fiber shall have this form factor.
4. The district has been wired with single mode fiber at all locations.

### **Classroom Counts**

- Strayhorn High School has 30 Classrooms and 4 Other Areas
- Strayhorn Elementary has 30 Classrooms and 4 Other Areas
- Coldwater Attendance Center has 24 Classrooms and 6 Other Areas.
- District Office has 11 rooms.
- The bus shop will not be included in this RFP.
- Independence High School has 30 Classrooms and 6 Other areas
- East Tate Elementary has 48 Classrooms and 6 other areas
- The Career Technical Center has 7 Classrooms and 4 Other Areas

(General floor plans will be available at the walkthrough. Onsite walkthroughs will identify building materials, existing cabling, etc. Vendors will be responsible for taking any needed measurements during the walkthrough.)

### **Current Network Bandwidth and WAN Configuration**

- Each building in the Tate County School District is presently connected to the District Office via 1 Gbps Fiber provided by CSpire. 2.5Gbps speeds will be instituted in July, 2024.
- Servers and centralized devices are located on the building sites and at the Central Office. Each site has several switch cabinets and a main demark area. Details will be given at the onsite survey



or walkthrough.

- Currently, the District has a 1000 Mbps Internet connection that services the entire district which connects at Central Office. Traffic from the Internet is firewalled, filtered and regulated by devices located at the central office. (This is subject to be upgraded in the near future.)

### **E-Rate**

This proposal request is for services to be subsidized under the Universal Services E-Rate Program for Schools and Libraries. No purchase order will be issued, no installation will occur and no services will be provided until approval of the form 471 application that is issued as a result of the proposals being submitted in response to this request.

### **RIGHT TO REJECT**

The Tate County School District reserves the right to accept or reject all proposals or sections thereof when the rejection is in the best interest of the school system. The Tate County School District reserves the right to award without further discussion. Therefore, responses should be submitted initially with the most favorable terms the vendor proposes. The Tate County School District reserves the right to reject the proposal of a vendor who has previously failed to perform properly or completed on time contracts and to reject the proposal of any vendor who in the opinion of the Tate County School District Board of Trustee or Superintendent, is not in a position to adequately perform the contract. The Tate County School District Board of Trustees or Superintendent reserves the right to reject any and all proposals any part or parts of a proposal, waive any technicalities/informalities, increase or reduce quantities, make modifications or specifications, and award any or the entire contract in a manner that is in the best interest of the Tate County School District. Contracts will be awarded to the vendor submitting the proposal determined to be in the best interests of the Tate County School District.

ATTACHMENT A

**INFORMATION FORM (Type or Print ONLY)**

<b>NAME OF COMPANY</b>	
<b>ADDRESS OF HOME OFFICE</b>	
<b>CITY OF HOME OFFICE</b>	
<b>STATE OF HOME OFFICE</b>	
<b>COUNTY OF HOME OFFICE</b>	
<b>9 DIGIT HOME OFFICE ZIP</b>	
<b>PHONE # OF HOME OFFICE</b>	
<b>Federal EIN</b>	
<b>DUNS Number</b>	
<b>E-Rate SPIN number</b>	

CONTACT Name \_\_\_\_\_

CONTACT Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

CONTACT Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

By signing below, the vendor acknowledges that the prices listed on this sheet are the prices being bid for this project and that the vendor understands that portions of this Project may be funded from E-Rate Funds. This project is subject to funding availability and contingent upon E-Rate funding.

PRINTED NAME \_\_\_\_\_ TITLE \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNED \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_



## ATTACHMENT B

### Vendor Required Documentation

- Specifications for the proposed hardware.
- Vendor shall provide a written summary of their proposal as well as drawings of all sites labeled with the location of the each access point being proposed and the path of the access points' cabling to each network closet. Vendor will verify if the District has enough available switch ports and/or patch panel ports in each closet for their proposed solution.
- Current liability insurance and workers compensation insurance.
- Documentation of the vendor's wireless, switching and cabling certifications.
- Three K-12 wireless references.
- Must include a detailed Scope of Work describing this "turnkey" project.