Richmond County School System

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TO: Board Members

FROM: Bobby A. Smith

VIA: Angela D. Pringle, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

DATE February 1, 2019

SUBJECT: E-rate 22 (2019) Network Infrastructure (53 Schools)

Three bids were received for the E-rate 22 (2019) solicitation.

A3 Communications, Inc. was the "low bidder" and meets bid specifications, however, reference data from the ten Georgia school districts listed as references indicated the vendor has no experience in large school districts such as Richmond County, and has almost no experience in installing equipment they bid. The ten districts used as references have an average enrollment of 5,018, only 16% as large as Richmond County. Of the 2,830 network components installed in the ten listed districts, only 23 were of the manufacturer bid, less than 1%. References were called for all three vendors providing bids for this project. All reference calls were positive, except for one A3 Communications reference, who presented a very negative perspective of A3 work quality, technical competence, and responsiveness. Indications were they would not consider A3 for any future projects.

Layer 3 Communications, LLC was second low bidder, and meets bid specifications. This company has extensive experience in installing and configuring network components contained in their bid, in large Georgia school districts, including Richmond County. Additionally, their bid is only 1% greater than the low bid, therefore Administration recommends the contract be awarded to Layer 3 Communications.

Once Federal E-rate Approval has been granted, Richmond County School System's portion will be 15% of the total contract. The school system's matching obligation will be funded through the FY20 Information Technology Department's general fund budget.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
E-RATE 22 (2019)** Network Infrastructure (53 Schools)
Bid Opening Date: January 24, 2019

VENDOR	NETWORK INFRASTRUCTURE (51) SCHOOLS**
A3 Communications, Inc. 10700 Abbotts Bridge Road, Suite 140 Duluth, GA 30097	$1,897,400.99
Layer 3 Communications, LLC 1450 Oakbrook Drive, Suite 900 Norcross, GA 30093	$1,916,444.42
NetPlanner Systems, Inc. 3145 Northwoods Parkway, Suite 800 Peachtree Corners, GA 30071	$2,284,423.97

** Although we have had excellent approval rates in the past, E-Rate funding is not guaranteed. The SLD may choose not to approve funding for E-Rate projects for a number of reasons. In the event projects are not funded, the Board must identify alternative funding sources, or determine to cancel or reduce the scope of the projects.