E-Rate FY2026

CATEGORY 2
INTERNAL CONNECTIONS
SD-WAN Router/Gateway Equipment

RFP # 26-914

RFP Issued: November 21, 2025

Questions and Answers #2

POSTED: December 5, 2025

Deadline for Submittal: January 6, 2026
BEFORE 2:00 P.M.

Questions:

- Do you anticipate any WAN upgrades in the next 5yrs for the 22 locations?
  RESPONSE: *The bandwidth specifications provided in the RFP already account for our projected future growth. The figures listed below illustrate the growth factor for each site type from its current bandwidth to the requested RFP levels.*

    - Site A – 1.5G -> Future ?
      RESPONSE: *This requested speed represents a capacity increase of 200%–650% over current levels.*

    - Site B – 2.5G -> Future ?
      RESPONSE: *This requested speed represents a capacity increase of 150% over current levels.*

    - HQ – 10G -> Future ?
      RESPONSE: *This requested speed represents a capacity increase of 100% over current levels.*

- Do you need any 1G, 10G, or 100G optics for each of the locations? If so, please specify the number and type(speed and SMF/MMF) of optics required for each location.
  RESPONSE: *The hand-off from carriers has yet to be determined. For RFP quoting purposes plan for the following (final decisions will occur before final orders are placed:*
  Site A: *Include 1QTY - 1G SFP MMF / 1QTY - 1G SFP SMF*
  Site B: *Include 1QTY - 1G SFP of each type (MMF/SMF) / 1QTY 1G SFP of each type MMF/SMF*
  HQ or District Office: *Include 2QTY - 10G of each type (MMF/SMF)*

- a vendor proposes a new SDWAN school hardware appliance for a specific school branch location, and its advertised Threat Prevention Throughput is within a 10% tolerance (e.g., 2.2 Gbps) of the required minimum (2.5 Gbps firewall throughput) for that school, will this proposal be considered fully compliant, assuming the device fully meets or exceeds all other capacity metrics (e.g., sessions, new connections, firewall throughput)? Can a range of throughput be provided for qualification of capacity (e.g. 2Gbps to 4Gbps)?
  RESPONSE: *The District is willing to allow a 10% tolerance for throughput metrics specifically related to optional features (e.g., Threat Prevention), provided the device fully meets the mandatory core requirements for Routing and Basic Firewall Throughput. Since advanced security features are considered optional add-ons, variances in their specific throughput performance will not disqualify a proposal, provided the base connectivity capacity is not compromised.*

- Are there file transfers and/or backups that traverse the network topology from site to site ? If so, what are the general sizes, frequencies and timings of these file transfers? Additionally, are these file transfers and/or backup transfers occurring from on-prem locations to cloud-hosted locations? If so, can you please provide a listing of the cloud-hosted offload locations?
  RESPONSE: *The District utilizes both on-premises and off-premises backup destinations. The majority of these transfers originate from the District Office and occur outside of instructional hours, typically during overnight windows.*

  The filesize during the day are tiny increments that occur every few minutes over our internal network which is less than 4Mbps of steady traffic (and the transfers are self-healing if connections are dropped). Our nightly backups size is about 10-12GB due to delta changes and are shipping internal and our offsite locations. Full Size backups are about 1TB in total, (streamed overtime and self-healing).

  Due to security protocols, the District will not disclose specific vendor names or cloud-hosting locations in this public response.

- Is the Westbrook support facility expected to serve as a secondary SD-WAN Hub/Controller (e.g., in a dual-hub topology) alongside the District Office, or will it function as a standard branch location?
  RESPONSE: *Yes, Westbrook is designated as a secondary SD-WAN Hub/Controller location. This dual-hub topology is intended to provide redundancy and ensure continuity of operations should the District Office become unreachable.*

- Can the District confirm if the requirement for 10Gbps SFP+ interfaces is mandatory for all Site A (Standard Schools) locations, or if 1Gbps Copper interfaces alone will be sufficient for these locations?
  RESPONSE: *Standard 1 Gbps copper interfaces are sufficient for Site A locations. The total requested capacity will be achieved through multiple links (e.g., SD-WAN aggregation), with no single handoff exceeding 1 Gbps.*

- For the District Office and Westbrook, are the SD-WAN Gateway devices expected to perform Network Address Translation (NAT) inline as the security perimeter, or are they expected to operate behind an existing firewall/NAT device?
  RESPONSE: *The District's current infrastructure is flexible and can accommodate either deployment model for these two sites. We are prepared to implement the SD-WAN gateways either inline or behind existing firewalls, depending on the solution's best practices.*

- The proposed solution offers dynamic path quality-based failover (e.g., measuring latency, jitter, and loss) and hard link-down failover. Does the District have a preference for prioritizing application traffic based on real-time Path Quality Profiles over traditional hard failover methods?
  RESPONSE: *The District requires a solution that supports both methods simultaneously. We intend to configure these policies on a per-site or per-application basis. While our primary preference is for dynamic, quality-based routing (e.g., Path Quality, Fastest Path), we must retain the ability to enforce hard failover where dictated by specific site constraints or bandwidth limitations.*

- For the Next-Generation Security requirements, can the District clarify if specific features such as URL Filtering, Sandboxing/Advanced Malware Detection, and DNS Security are mandatory components of the required security stack, or if they are considered optional add-ons?
  RESPONSE: *These features are considered optional. Please present them as separate line items or add-ons so that the District can evaluate the core offering independently.*

- Can the District confirm that the existing or proposed ISP circuits allow for NAT Traversal (e.g., UDP/IPsec encapsulation) necessary for establishing the SD-WAN overlay tunnels between sites?
  RESPONSE: *Yes. The District's Internet Service specifications require support for either pass-through connectivity or Source NAT (S-NAT) with NAT Traversal capabilities to ensure successful tunnel establishment*.

- Regarding the District Office hardware, which reaches EoL in August 2028: Should a replacement hardware cost be listed as an Optional (Non-Funded FY2026) line item in the Bid Form, or should the proposal only address the SD-WAN subscription until that time?
  RESPONSE: T*he proposal must address both scenarios:*

  Base Bid: Pricing for utilizing the existing hardware and licenses (including any new SD-WAN licenses required) through the equipment's EOL date.

  Optional Line Item: A separate, optional cost for the replacement hardware and associated licenses (marked as Non-Funded FY2026) to cover the period post-EOL.