

SOUTH PASADENA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Business Services Office



**TO:** Board of Education

**FROM:** Dave Lubs, Assistant Superintendent of Business Services

**PREPARED BY:** Derek Aoki, Director of Technology

**DATE:** March 14, 2017

**SUBJECT:** Approval to Award NIC Partners the E-Rate RFP – Edge Switching Project

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**Background**

South Pasadena Unified School District filed for three RFP's under the USAC (Universal Service Administrative Co.) E-Rate Program for Year 20 (2017-2018). Among these proposals was a project to upgrade the layer 3 Edge Networking Switches at our three Elementary School MDF(s) (Main Distribution Frames).

**Discussion**

USAC E-Rate is a federal program that provides schools and libraries funding for eligible products and services based on NSLP (National School Lunch Program) percentages. While SPUSD is currently only 18%, there is a chance that we may receive partial funding. The funding levels depend on the number and amount of applications that USAC receives, with higher NSLP entities getting priority.

Layer 3 Network Switches have replaced the traditional router due to their ability to provide the same dynamic routing at a lower cost. The edge switch (school) connects to the core switch (District Office), and provides internet access and data between the IDF(s) (Intermediate Distribution Frames) at each site.

Currently we have very outdated equipment across the entire district. The current switches do not all contain the necessary power for current wireless access points and VOIP phones. Our plan is to slowly upgrade from the inside out, so that we can provide our staff and students with the network necessary to support current generation devices and curriculum. Purchasing these switch stacks will create 10G links between sites (when paired with a new

core switch). Currently we are capped at 1G between the District Office and schools. The expectations are that these switches will service the district for approximately seven years. The Request for Proposal included switches, one year warranty, installation/configuration, modules, and cables.

Five vendors responded to our Edge Switch RFP. Of all five vendors, NIC Partners offered the lowest price. SPUSD has done business with NICP in the past. Selection was based on a matrix (attached) that was completed by three members of the SPUSD Technology Department. The matrix was weighted most heavily on price, while other factors were included.

Although this upgrade is necessary, we have the right to withdraw from the contract whether we are approved by USAC or not. This clause was written into the CMAS RFO (attached).

### **Fiscal Impact**

\$66,087.14 for the completed project. No recurring costs, as a spare switch will suffice in place of a support contract. USAC will refund a portion of this total based on approval. Based on current numbers for 1-19% NSLP entities in urban areas, we expect a refund of 40% (\$26,434) if approved.

### **Recommendation**

Dave Lubs, Assistant Superintendent of Business Services, recommends that the Board of Education approve the award to NIC Partners for the E-Rate Edge Switching Project.