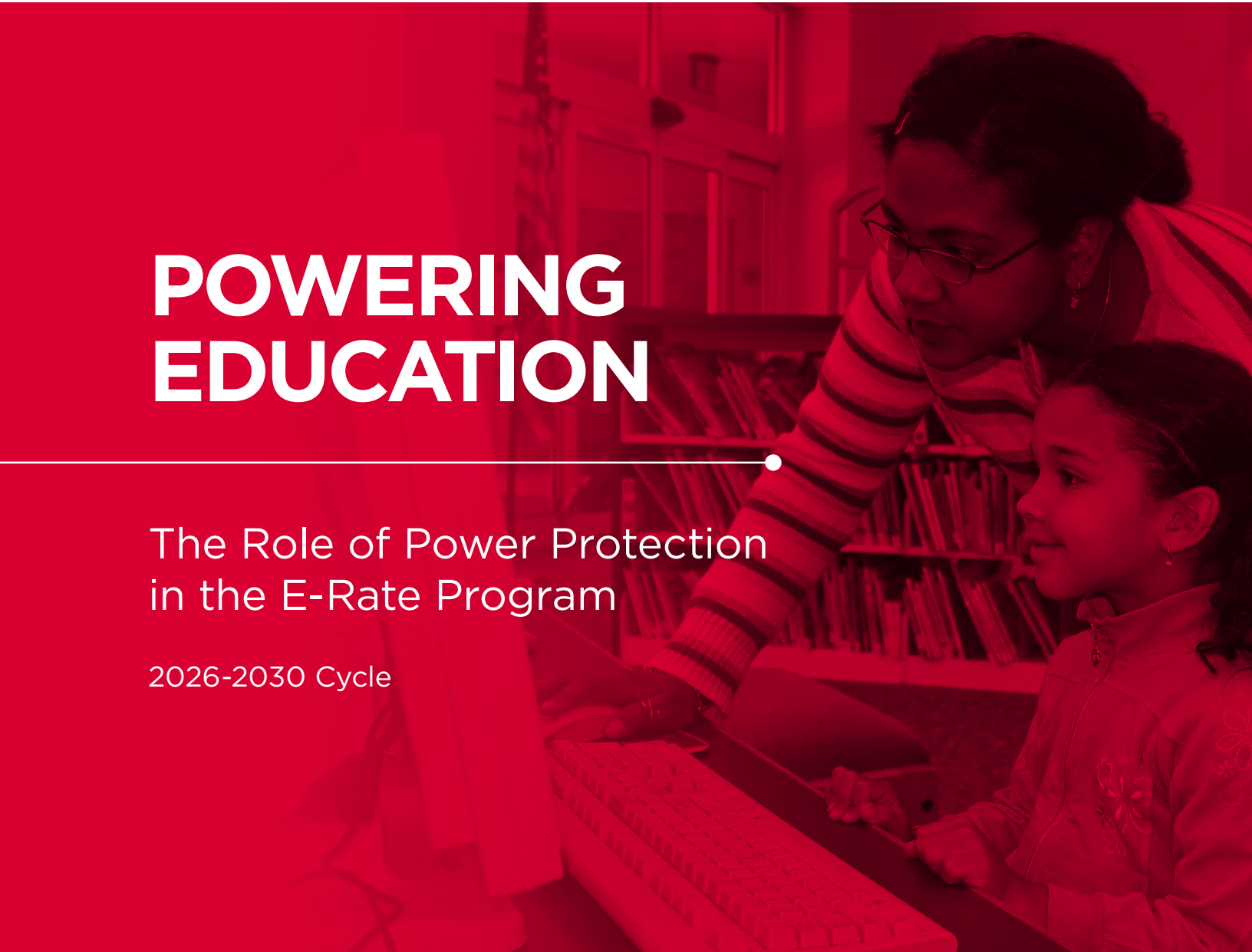




POWERING EDUCATION

The Role of Power Protection
in the E-Rate Program

2026-2030 Cycle



THE FOUNDATIONS OF E-RATE



Schools and libraries have become information hubs where millions of students and patrons need technologies at their fingertips. But these new technologies are not affordable for many of our communities. In response, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) created the E-Rate program so all students and library patrons across the U.S. can have access to digital, electronic curricula, and resources.

Under the program, schools and libraries are awarded federally-funded discounts on networking equipment for internet access, telecommunications, internal connections, and services to improve their technology offerings. Schools apply for funding and are awarded discounts based on economic need and other factors.

The ongoing proliferation of innovative digital learning technologies and the need to connect students, teachers, and consumers to jobs, life-long learning, and information have led to a steady rise in demand for bandwidth in schools and libraries. The FCC has refocused E-Rate from legacy telecommunications services to ensuring broadband Internet access for digital learning.

Under the E-Rate program, schools and libraries apply for funding and discounts ranging from 20 to 90 percent.

E-RATE ELIGIBILITY

E-Rate assists schools and libraries with funding so that they can provide digital learning opportunities

STEPS FOR FUNDING

- 1 Determine if you're eligible for E-Rate funding. Check out USAC's website usac.org to see if you qualify.
- 2 Begin the application process with a competitive bidding process for your requested products(s) and service(s).
- 3 Select your preferred, most-effective vendor(s).
- 4 Submit an application to USAC for approval.
- 5 USAC issues funding commitments to eligible applicants.



SCHOOLS

To be eligible, schools must meet the definition of an elementary or secondary school as defined by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 ((20 U.S.C. Section 7801(18) and (38)).

LIBRARIES

To be eligible, libraries must meet the statutory definition of library or library consortium that is defined by the 1996 Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) (Pub. L. 104-208).



LESSONS IN POWER

Power protection devices are an insurance policy for the technology that schools and libraries rely on to enhance learning

Today, students use computers and the internet for class assignments, research, and collaboration. This type of digital learning requires the right equipment and reliable power to support it.

Power protection has become an integral part of equipping schools with uninterrupted access to their digital technology and networks that deliver information and electronic curriculum. By utilizing UPS systems, schools ensure the full availability of broadband and telecommunication networks.

UPS systems ensure consistent power to equipment and minimize the downtime during minor power fluctuations. Battery backup power also prevents data loss that can occur during complete power failures. UPS systems are included in the E-Rate program under Category 2.





E-RATE CATEGORIES

Funding for eligible services

CATEGORY 1

- Data transmission services
- Internet access
- Voice services

CATEGORY 2

- Internal connections
- Managed internal connections
- Basic maintenance of internal connections

As a data protection component of the information delivery systems E-Rate is intended to fund, battery backups and UPS systems fit into Category 2: Internal Connections. For a full listing of services eligible for E-Rate discounts, visit: www.usac.org.

Components under Category 2 are eligible only if they are considered an essential element in the transmission of information.

UPS systems will protect eligible network equipment such as routers, switches, and access points, from power fluctuations and outages, ensuring the continuous operation of the network infrastructure that facilitates broadband connectivity.

UPS systems are eligible for E-Rate funding as a data protection component.



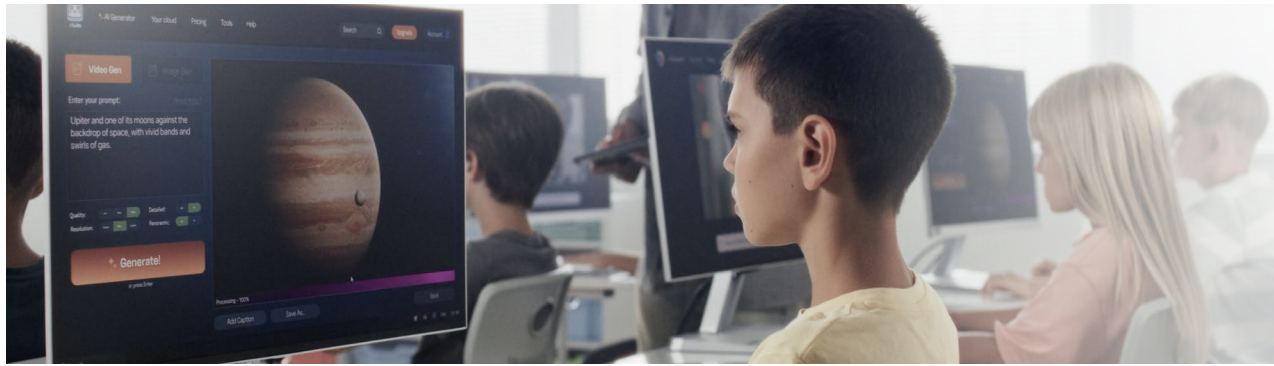
E-RATE UPDATES

The E-Rate program has recently undergone several key changes. The FCC has expanded funding eligibility to include Wi-Fi hotspots for off-campus use, and for Wi-Fi on school buses to address the “homework gap.” A new \$200 million cybersecurity pilot program has also been launched.

KEY RECENT DEVELOPMENTS:

- **Wi-Fi hotspots for off-premises use:** allow E-Rate funds to support Wi-Fi hotspots and mobile wireless internet services that schools and libraries can lend to students, staff, and patrons for use outside of school or library premises.
- **Wi-Fi on school buses:** allow E-Rate funding for Wi-Fi on school buses, recognizing the need for connectivity during student commutes.
- **Category 2 budget cycle (2026-2030):** For the upcoming cycle, the FCC has announced updates to the Category 2 funding floors and multipliers. These include a funding floor of \$30,175, a multiplier of \$201.57 per student, and \$5.43 per square foot for libraries. Applicants will need to validate their student counts or library square footage in the first year of this cycle to set their budget for the entire period.

It’s important for schools and libraries to stay informed about these developments, as policy changes and deadlines can significantly impact their ability to secure funding for essential connectivity and technology services.



E-RATE GUIDELINES

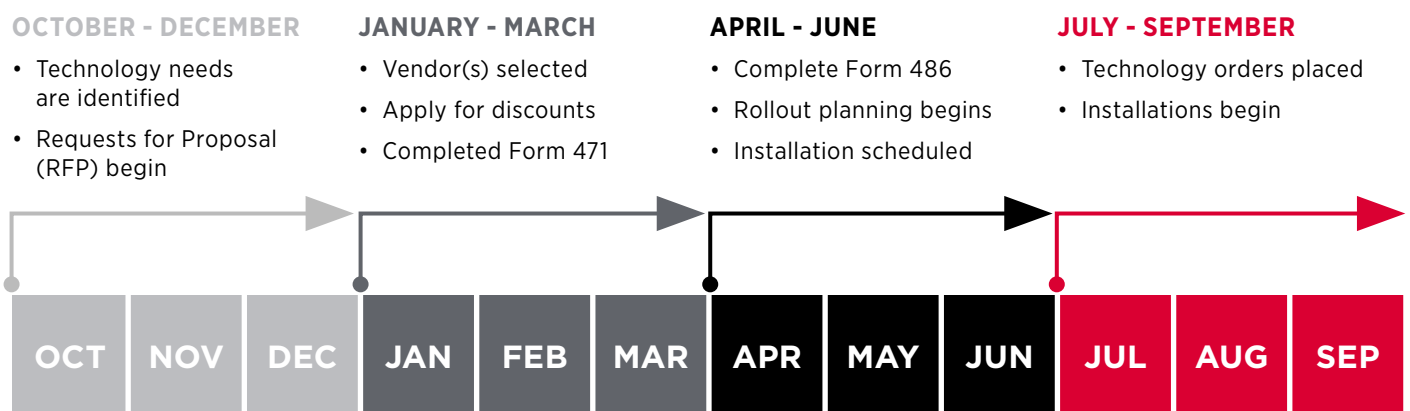
The application process and timelines

In January, a “filing window” is usually announced for when FCC Form 470 is due to the USAC to seek available funding for projects. In order to solicit bids for services and technology, schools need to file this form.

After filing (typically due around the end of February), schools need to wait 28 days before reviewing bids from providers.

After 28 days, schools can then begin completing FCC Form 471, which is used to request discounts on eligible products and services. This form is usually due at the end of March of each year.

Schools submit Form 471 after they have selected their service providers and vendors.



The E-Rate program application schedule changes from year to year. Visit www.usac.org/si/ for official deadlines and updates on the E-Rate process.

BEST PRACTICES

When applying for E-Rate funding, schools and libraries need to consider timing and the most efficient ways of navigating the application process. Below are some tips and best practices to keep in mind:



USE THE USAC AS A RESOURCE

If any questions come up during the application process, the USAC can provide answers when given time to do so. USAC representatives can also ensure applications are filled out correctly.

PLAN AHEAD

Networking and technology can be a huge undertaking and requires planning up to three years into the future. It's in your best interest to plan ahead to properly allocate and request funding and prioritize projects.

PROVIDE DETAILS AND BENEFITS

For vendors bidding on E-Rate projects, be sure to provide detailed product comparisons and highlight the benefits of the products being offered. Include warranty information and options as these can illustrate lower total cost of ownership over the life cycle of the product(s).



YOUR ULTIMATE ALLY IN POWER

How CyberPower can help



The program allows individual libraries, schools and districts to choose the provider(s) and/or technologies that best fit their needs.

With years of experience in the education market and its offering of, cost-effective power management products, CyberPower is an ideal fit for E-Rate projects that include power.

We're here to help coordinate delivery times, locations, and storage prior to deployment and to assist with installation schedules.

And whether you're a solutions provider or an IT professional, CyberPower is the most responsive organization to support your efforts and systems.

CyberPower can customize the right power protection solution to fit your needs.

WHY CYBERPOWER?

Power is our focus. As a true manufacturer, we control product quality at every step from product design to production to delivery. This allows us to offer great value along with industry leading warranties and connected equipment guarantees. To learn more, go to cyberpowersystems.com.

Make sure your students have continuous access to the latest learning technology. Take advantage of E-Rate discounts and start planning today!



CALL

our dedicated pre-sales support professionals to answer your questions at 877.901.1930



CHAT

with our UPS systems experts online at cyberpowersystems.com/support/



CLICK

on our UPS Selector tool to find the right UPS system for you. Go to: cyberpowersystems.com/tools/ups-selector/