

Vendors must be registered as a service provider with the Schools and Libraries Division (SLD) of the Federal Communications Commission, have a Service Provider Identification Number (SPIN), and comply with all SLD service provider requirements. The vendor shall give its ERATE SPIN number in its proposal. Vendors on Louisiana State Contract should provide the State Contract Number on the proposal. All vendors submitting proposals must carefully read and abide by the Eligible Services List on the Schools & Libraries Web site:
<http://www.sl.universalservice.org/reference/eligible.asp>

All questions or requests for information must be sent via email to eratequestions@nls.k12.la.us with "ERATE Vendor Question" in the subject line. We will attempt to post all questions with responses to the district website within 48 hours of receiving email. No questions will be answered in person or by phone. Questions may also be faxed to 318-368-9818.

Submitted proposals must comply with the competitive bidding requirement of the SLD for Universal Service Fund services and support state and local bid laws. To facilitate the district's decision making process, proposals should be clearly broken down between ERATE eligible and ineligible components with a subtotal for each category. The district's anticipated discount rate should be applied to the ERATE eligible components subtotal so that the total cost to the district can be determined.

Request and/or submittal of a proposal do not constitute an obligation to award a contract. Union Parish School District may accept or reject any and/or all proposals based on any technical complications that may arise. Awarded contracts will be made in keeping with the best interest of Union Parish School District.

Each proposal should be placed in an individual envelope and clearly marked as to what item or service is being proposed. Do not place more than one proposal in an envelope, although several envelopes may be packaged together for shipment.

All contracts will have a clause voiding any items or services not approved by USAC. Union Parish School District is not obligated to fulfill any contract not approved by USAC. Union Parish School District is only responsible for the discounted portion of any contracted amount. The vendor will be responsible for filing for its reimbursement of the discounted portion with the SLD.

To be considered, all proposals for Digital Service (1.5mbps or better), Internet Access and Email Service should be received at Union Parish School Board by noon on February 9, 2006. The preferred contact method is email, iaerateproposals@nls.k12.la.us. This email address will not be checked until the morning of February 9, 2006. All proposals should be submitted in writing, even if submitted by email, to
Union Parish School District
Attn: ERATE Proposals
P.O. Box 308
1206 Marion Highway
Farmerville, LA 71241

Proposals for Digital Service, Internet Access and Email Service will be opened at 10:00 a.m. on February 10, 2006 in an open meeting.

Union Parish School District reserves the right to reject any and all proposals.

Telecommunications funded under ERATE

Digital Service (1.5 mbps or better, depending on district's decision of Internet Access bandwidth) Would consider wireless and/or broadband solution.

Internet Access funded under ERATE

Minimum bandwidth of 1.5 mbps (T1) or higher for 8 Union Parish School District sites, including routers. The district is seriously looking to increase current bandwidth to a minimum of 45 mbps (T3) due to frequent saturation of current T1. Would consider wireless and/or broadband solution. Vendor should submit pricing for possible upgrades and bandwidth increases for any contracts. District does a high amount of IP-based videoconferencing. Vendor must have the ability to support this service.

The district is also seeking email service for approximately 500 users.

District will consider multi-year contract with voluntary extensions.

To be considered, vendors should have a minimum of 5 years experience providing service to school districts. The vendor must provide a history of the company, strengths and stability, including years in business, existing customer satisfaction, and number of customers in Louisiana. The vendor must provide at least 3 references from customers with environments similar to Union Parish School District. The ISP must provide near-immediate telephone support and have qualified network engineers and technicians within a 100 mile radius that can diagnose problems quickly and recommend solutions. Any hardware or other changes required for Vendor's implementation will be provided by Vendor as ERATE rules allow. Any other costs beyond ERATE scope should be clearly identified in Vendor's proposal.

Costs will be final deciding factor with contract awarded to lowest bidder.