

September 26, 2017

TO THE ADMINISTRATOR ADDRESSED:

Subject: FCC E-rate Relief for Affected LEAs

On September 15, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) filed a request with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for relief from various E-rate rules and procedures on behalf of all local education agencies (LEAs) affected by Hurricane Harvey.

The request seeks the opening of a Special Harvey Funding Window to make funds immediately available. To provide students and communities with needed telecommunications and information services, the agency also requested:

- A 90 to 100 percent discount rate for affected entities,
- an extension of forms filing deadlines for all affected entities, including current and future funding year deadlines,
- relaxing of rules to allow for rapid restoration of networks, including extended timelines for construction in areas that were destroyed,
- waiving the service substitution request rules to allow applicants to substitute services in broad categories (telecommunications service, Internet service and internal connections), and
- waiving the Category 2 Budget limitation of \$150 per student over five years, to allow for both equipment replacement in destroyed buildings and temporary networks during the interim.

Additionally, the agency requested that affected entities be allowed to cancel 471 plans because, in some cases, upgrades may not be possible or recommended.

Due to the extensive damage, the rebuilding of some schools or libraries may not start until 2019 or 2020. The TEA requested the FCC consider any other changes in rules or regulations to ease the burdens Hurricane Harvey has placed or may place on all directly and indirectly affected applicants in Texas.

The Agency will notify all affected LEAs of the FCC decisions.

Sincerely,

Mike Morath

Commissioner of Education
Texas Education Agency