



# RI Department Of Education Wireless Classroom Initiative



**LEA WCI ROLLOUT MEETING  
FEBRUARY 26, 2013**



Cynthia Brown, Director Office of Statewide Efficiencies  
Craig Hockenbrough, PMP, Gurnet Consulting

# WCI Rollout Meeting Agenda



1. Welcome & Introductions
2. WCI Program Overview
  - A. Program Objectives
  - B. Program Oversight
3. Rollout Approach
  - A. LEA Readiness
  - B. E-Rate Program
  - C. Covered Technology
  - D. Scheduling
  - E. Vendor Management
4. Grant Administration
  - A. Original Estimates
  - B. Grant Allocation
  - C. Accountability
5. Open Forum (Q&A)

# Meeting Objectives



1. Understand WCI Scope
  - ✦ LEA Leaders will understand the scope of the WCI program
2. Understand WCI Management
  - ✦ LEA Leaders will understand how the WCI Rollout will be managed
  - ✦ LEA Leaders will understand how the Technology Bond Grant will be managed
3. Understand the Initial WCI Plan
  - ✦ LEA Leaders will understand high level timelines, key milestones, and project dependencies
  - ✦ LEA Leaders will understand the roles and responsibilities of all key stakeholders
  - ✦ LEA will understand how to work with vendors

# WCI Program Overview



## Program Objectives

WCI will provide all RI students with:

1. Equal Access
  - A. To the tools and resources to prepare them for learning in the 21st century and...
  - B. Ultimately competing in a global economy
2. Opportunities for digital learning, including...
  - A. Virtual classrooms
  - B. Online instruction and communication
  - C. Interactive instruction, instructional gaming, and blended learning
  - D. On-line assessments (e.g. PARCC)

# WCI Program Overview



## Program Oversight

### 1. RIDE Office of Statewide Efficiencies

- Led by Cynthia Brown, Director of OSE
- Program Management provided by
  - ✦ Craig Hockenbrough, Program Manager. Gurnet Consulting
  - ✦ Karen Cooper, RIDE OSE Senior Project Manager
  - ✦ Jonathan Gabriel, RIDE OSE Coordinator

### 2. WCI Advisory Board

- LEA IT Directors
- RI Office of Digital Excellence

# WCI Program Overview



## WCI Program: Roles & Responsibilities

Role	Name(s)	Responsibilities
RIDE Director, OSE	Cynthia Brown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Executive leadership of WCI Program</li><li>• Decisions &amp; escalations</li><li>• Field Communications</li></ul>
RIDE Sr. Project Manager, OSE	Karen Cooper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• RIDE Administrative Liaison to Director Brown</li><li>• Facilitates issues resolution &amp; risk mitigation activities</li><li>• Internal Advisor</li><li>• PMO Contributor</li><li>• Assist with LEA communications</li></ul>
Sr. Consultant & PMO Lead, Gurnet Consulting	Craig Hockenbrough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provides management and technical consulting services</li><li>• Leads PMO activities and provides overall project services</li></ul>
Project Management Office (PMO)	Karen Cooper Jonathan Gabriel Craig Hockenbrough Philip Rogers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provides project leadership, tools, and methodologies for successful delivery of the project</li><li>• Works with LEAs to manage vendors and facilitate funding</li><li>• Determines implementation sequencing based on LEA input</li></ul>

# WCI Program Overview



## WCI Program Oversight: Roles & Responsibilities

Role	Name(s)	Responsibilities
WCI Advisory Board	<p><u>District/LEA Reps</u> Eric Butash (North Smithfield) Michael DeMatteo (RIMA/BV) Alfred Notarianni (Tiverton) Peter Santos (Providence) Carlos Zambrano (E. Greenwich)</p> <p><u>RI Office of Digital Excellence</u> Thomas Guertin</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provides advisory and external perspective to RIDE</li><li>• Recommends a list of eligible services and equipment for reimbursement</li><li>• Participates in the RFQ technical-review committee for the selection of the state-approved vendors that will provide services to LEAs</li><li>• Assists in developing the work plan and overall project approach</li><li>• Continues to monitor and provide advisory services at regular intervals</li></ul>

# WCI Program Overview



## WCI Program Oversight: Roles & Responsibilities

Role	Name(s)	Responsibilities
Local Education Agencies	School Committees Superintendents Business / Finance IT Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Leadership approval of selected vendors, proposals, and technology solutions (supported by RIDE PMO).</li><li>• Collaboration with RIDE &amp; vendors to achieve lowest implemented cost per student/device</li><li>• Scheduling and supervising vendor installations</li><li>• All vendor contract administration including payables</li><li>• Requesting grant reimbursement from RIDE as work is done (acceptance milestones)</li></ul>

# WCI Program Rollout Approach



1. Program Initiation (Sep 2012 – Feb 2013)
  - A. Establish WCI Advisory Board
  - B. Survey LEAs
  - C. Qualify Vendors
  - D. Obtain Resources for Project Management Office (PMO)
  - E. Develop Project Charter & Scope
2. Program Planning (Feb 2013 – March 2013)
  - A. Establish PMO
  - B. Conduct Rollout Meeting for LEAs
  - C. Release qualified vendors list
  - D. Qualified vendors begin site surveys
  - E. Initial LEA implementation sequencing
  - F. Complete baseline project plan

# WCI Program Rollout Approach, cont.



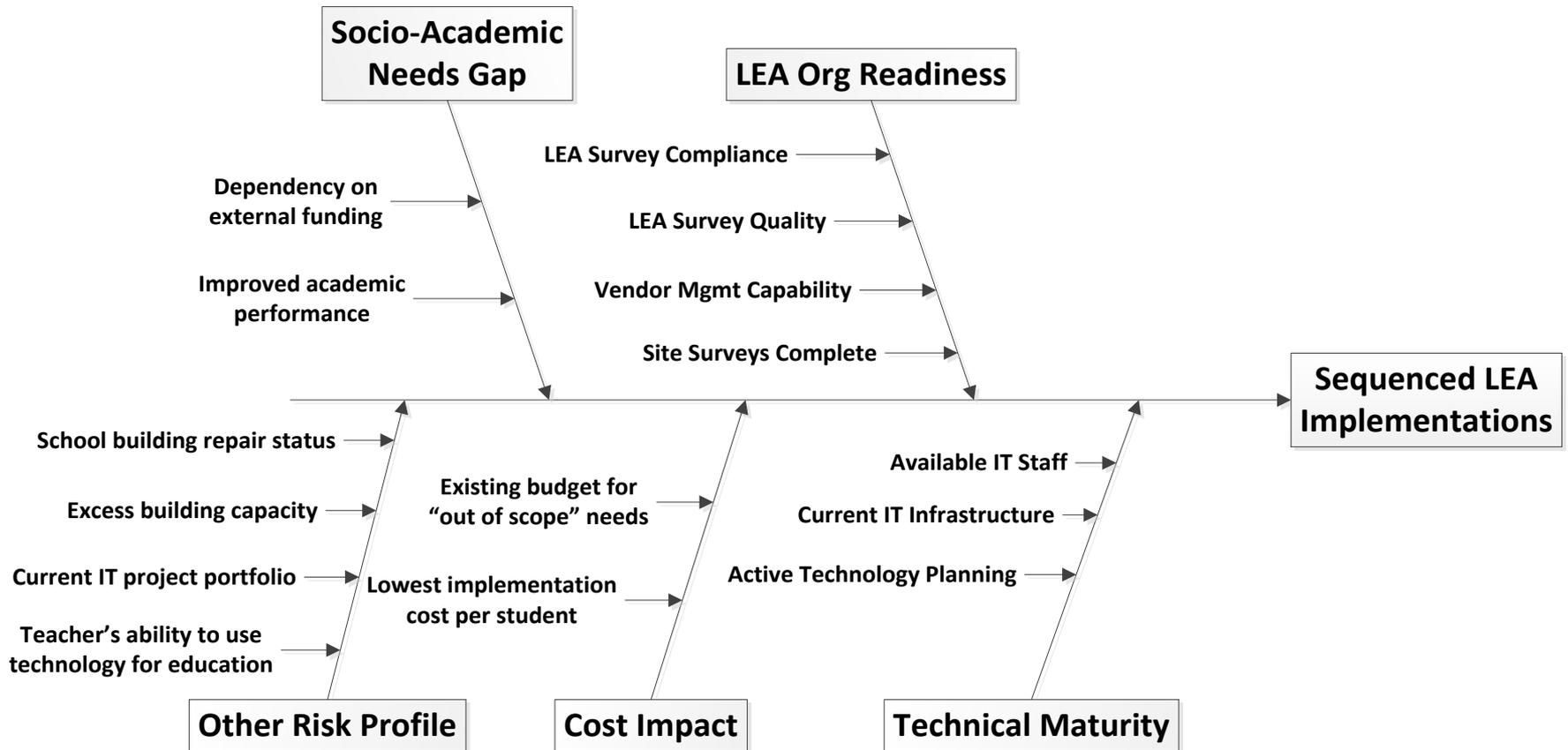
## 3. Program Execution (Mar 2013 – Mar 2015)

- A. Work with vendors
- B. Determine implementation sequence in “waves”
- C. Implementation school by school
- D. Administer funding
- E. Quality reviews

## 4. Program Closedown (Mar 2015 – Apr 2015)

- A. Document Lessons Learned
- B. Complete and archive project documentation
- C. Closedown PMO

# LEA Readiness Sequencing Implementations



# E-Rate Program Considerations



## Funding under Priority Two

### Internal Connections

- Districts can apply for support for equipment and cabling onsite that transport info to classrooms.
- Subject to the Two-in-Five Rule
- Entities can only receive funding every two out of five years

### Basic Maintenance of Internal Connections (BMIC)

- Districts can apply for support for basic maintenance of eligible internal connections (e.g., configuration changes)
- Two-in-Five Rule does not apply to BMIC

### ELIGIBLE SERVICES LIST:

- The Eligible Services List (ESL) for each funding year provides guidance on the eligibility of products and services under the Schools and Libraries Program.
- <http://www.usac.org/sl/applicants/beforeyoubegin/eligible-services-list.aspx>

### 470 Application Created for the Wireless Classroom Initiative:

RIDE BEN# 120839 Form 470 Application # 315170001074929

Accessed here:

[http://www.slforms.universalservice.org/Form470Expert/Search\\_Select.aspx](http://www.slforms.universalservice.org/Form470Expert/Search_Select.aspx)

# Summary of Covered Infrastructure



The following categories of infrastructure equipment and materials are considered as “in-scope” for WCI funding†:

## 1. Hardware

- Cabling, wiring, and conduits (copper & fiber as required)
- Main and Intermediate Distribution Frames (MDFs/IDFs)
- Patch panels and network boxes
- Wireless Controllers & Access Points
- Switches and Routers
- Electrical to meet power requirements

## 2. Software

- Applicable management software

## 3. Labor & Fees

- Installation costs
- Configuration
- Permits

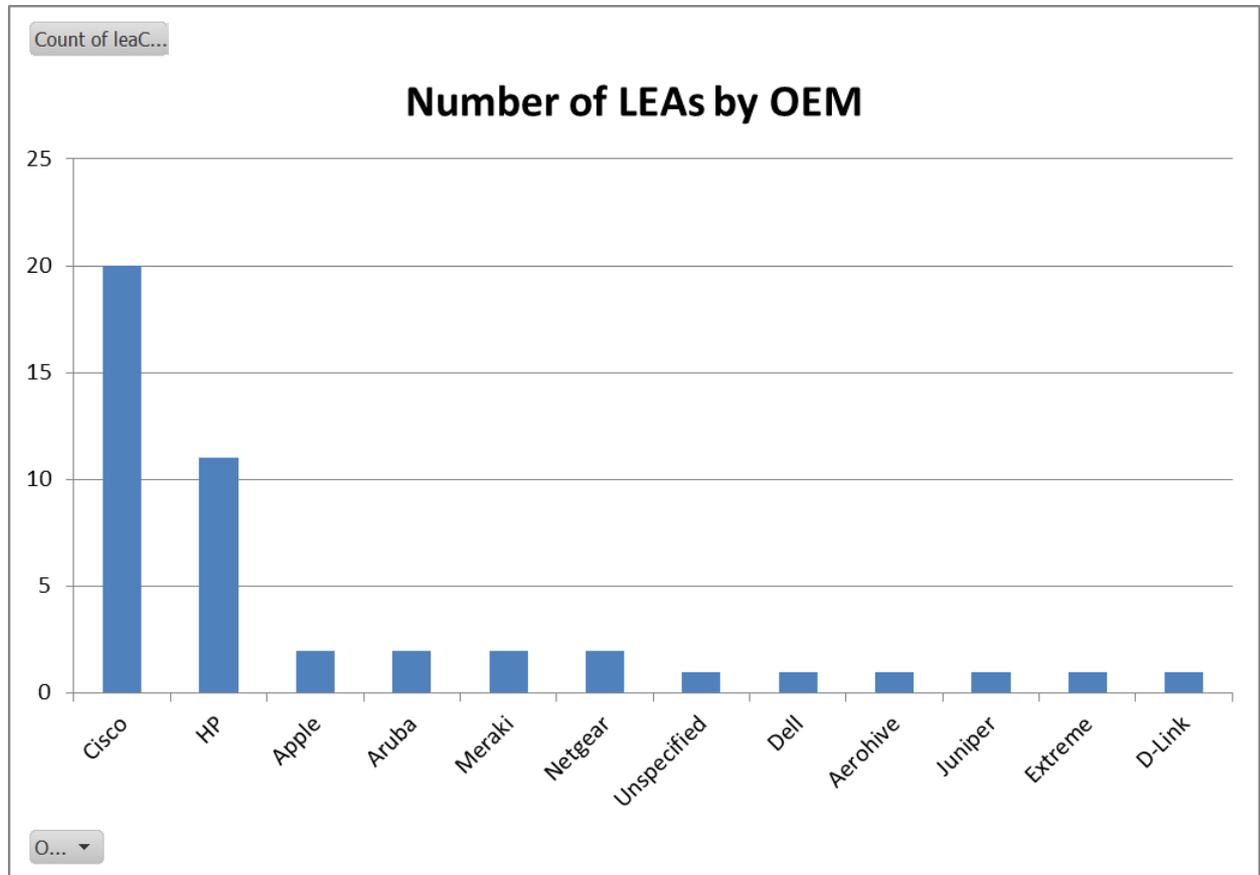
† as required to connect to existing closets and infrastructure for WCI purposes.

See the RFQ and future published specs for more information

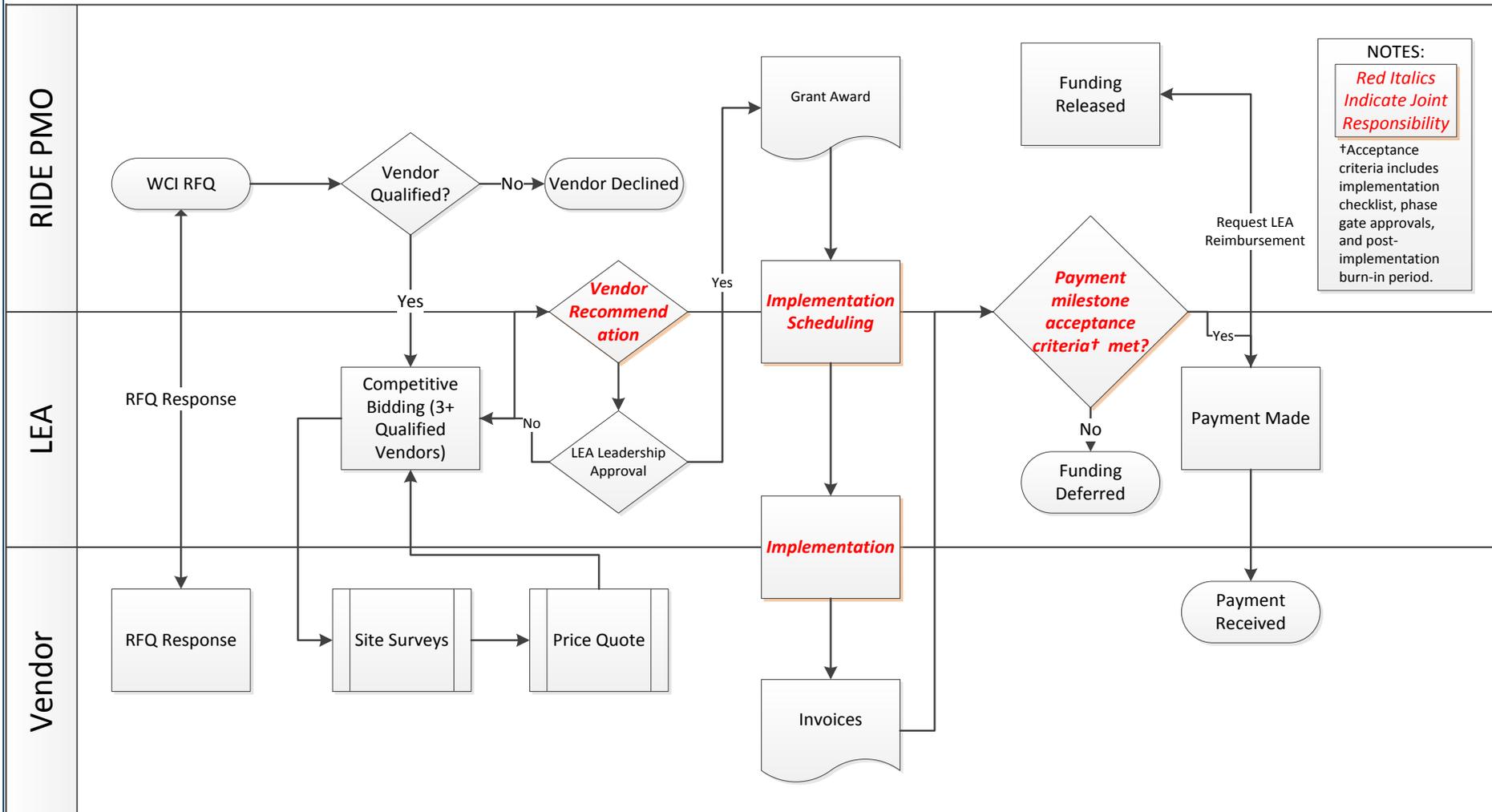


## Opportunity to Leverage Procurement

Due to the prominence of Cisco and HP equipment, RIDE can assist the LEAs in negotiating discounts.



# Rollout Approach Implementation & Funding Flow

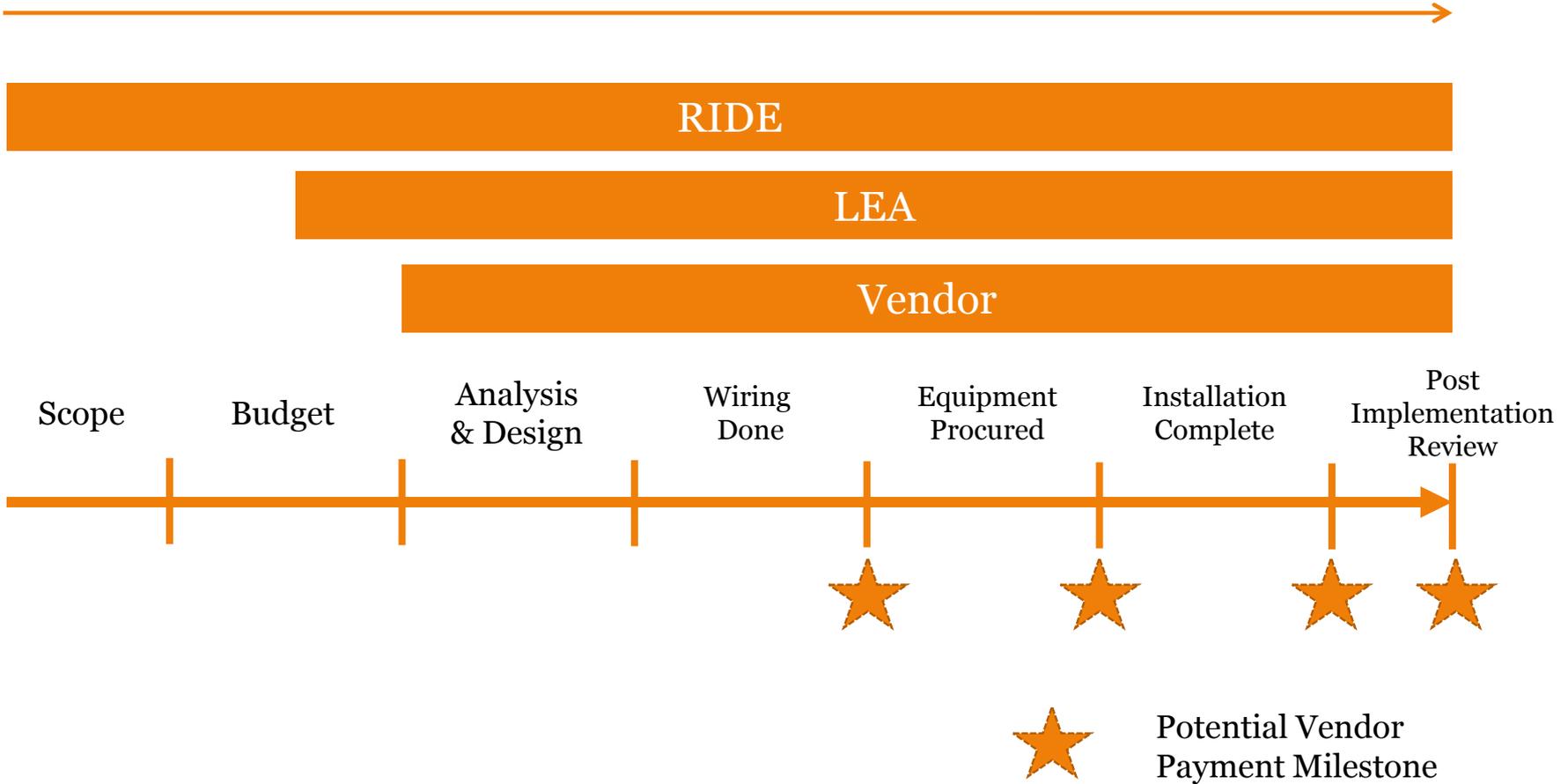


# Rollout Approach

## Typical Implementation Timeline by School



### Involvement



# Key Takeaways



## Subject

## Takeaway

### 1. WCI Objectives

- Wireless network connectivity for every classroom in the state
- Equal access for every student in the state

### 2. Grant Allocations

- Allocated to accomplish statewide objectives based on up to date implementation costs

### 3. Implementation Sequence

- As soon as possible based on LEA readiness and vendor capacity



**QUESTIONS & ANSWERS BY CATEGORY**

**HARDWARE & EQUIPMENT  
FUNDING  
SCHEDULE  
VENDORS  
STAFFING & SUPPORT**

Address all questions by email at:  
[WirelessInitiative@ride.ri.gov](mailto:WirelessInitiative@ride.ri.gov)



## Questions & Answers

### ABOUT EQUIPMENT & HARDWARE

#### **Who decides equipment specs and brands?**

- The LEA decides, within minimum guidelines. All proposed solutions must meet the minimum baseline specifications that RIDE will provide. Brand of equipment will not be dictated, but left up to the LEA/vendor to determine. All solutions must be either the same brand or 100% compatible with existing infrastructure.
- RIDE is working to document minimum technical specifications, elaborating on the high-level specs in the vendor RFQ. That document will be posted and available the week of March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

#### **What if existing infrastructure will not support the guidelines?**

- The RIDE PMO will work with you and your vendor(s) to come up with a viable solution that meets the objectives of the program.

#### **I currently have a wireless system that I'm not happy with. Rather than expand our existing system, can I choose another vendor/product from the list?**

- The bond is not designed to overhaul existing infrastructure, just to expand upon it to that it meets the baseline. However, if it is determined that the existing solution will not work for compatibility reasons, or if replacing a whole solution would prove to be more cost effective than upgrading the existing one, RIDE will work with the LEA to evaluate that solution.



## Questions & Answers

### ABOUT EQUIPMENT & HARDWARE

**Will the proposal include 802.11ac capable wireless access points? Currently Cisco is the only manufacturer providing 802.11ac upgradeable modules.**

- The baseline specifications detail 802.11n as the minimum standard that all access points must support. Any additional upgrades beyond this standard are not included in the scope of the bond. If the LEA wished to make any upgrades, they are able to do so, but will be liable for any costs above and beyond the baseline.

**What is the recommended uplink speed between data closets: 1GB or 10GB? Are we looking at copper or fiber?**

- RIDE recommends a minimum of 10 Gb uplinks between closets.
- The detailed specs are not yet finalized. However, due to the high speeds that will be required of the wired “backbone,” connections that experience a large amount of traffic (such as between network closets) should likely be fiber.



## Questions & Answers

ABOUT EQUIPMENT  
& HARDWARE

### **What is the recommended speed between switch and wireless access points?**

- All connections between switches and wireless access points must be at least 1Gb, made with Cat6 or better cable, and support PoE+.

### **Will RIDE cover content filter and security integration for wireless for a single sign-on system?**

- The purpose of WCI is to provide basic connectivity with devices that have security built-in to control access to and from networks. Web content filtering and security policy enforcement in general is the LEA responsibility.



# Questions & Answers

## ABOUT FUNDING

### **How do LEAs get reimbursed for up front expenditures?**

- Expenditures dated after the technical bond was approved and for services or equipment covered by WCI will be reimbursed by the same process as those covered in future implementations.

### **What if LEAs don't have any money to spend up front?**

- The grant allocation will be funded after qualified bidders are approved to commence work. Monies will be reimbursed within guidelines when vendor invoices are received and milestone deliverables are met.

### **How do we determine how much money LEAs receive?**

- Factors include qualified estimates from vendors and projected expenditures across all districts. There is a fixed amount of bond money available and our intent is that all students have equal access to wireless by the time this program is done.



# Questions & Answers

## ABOUT FUNDING

### **Is there enough money...what if we run out?**

- RIDE will work with all LEAs to assess the needs, locate all sources of supplementary funding (e.g. E-Rate), and negotiate with equipment suppliers for best price. At this point (before vendor estimates) we have no objective basis for determining the projected costs, but once the site surveys are in, we will have empirical data to use for a total projected cost.

### **What if the large school districts use all the money?**

- The large districts will be treated on par with small districts and everything in between. Implementations will be sequenced according to school readiness and vendor capacity. Optimally, every district will be ready for some schools to move forward in the first wave.

### **How does E-Rate qualification affect sequence and amount of funding?**

- Schools that have worked with the E-Rate program can get discounted pricing on equipment and therefore lower their implemented cost per student. That is a positive factor in our readiness assessment and can influence when a school will be scheduled for implementation.



## Questions & Answers

### ABOUT FUNDING

#### **Will our district receive the same amount of funding as listed in last year's communication?**

- The communication circulated last year was based on high-level estimates and dated information.
- We know how much money we have to spend across the state and we have been using several diagnostic tools including the LEA Self-Assessment Survey, PAARC data and upcoming IT Director interviews and vendor site surveys and proposals to more accurately assess the needs and project the costs.

#### **What if the LEA is already fully wireless? What should this LEA expect to receive?**

- Grants will be awarded for qualified expenditures since the tech bond was approved.
- If the LEA already meets minimum WCI standards and has not invested since the bond date, the district will be considered in the later phases of the WCI program.



# Questions & Answers

## ABOUT SCHEDULE

### **How do we evaluate LEAs in terms of implementation sequence?**

- It essentially gets down to LEA and school by school readiness as well as the capacity of the selected vendors.
- Between the LEA responses to the RIDE Self-Assessments, PARCC data, NECAP, and IT Director interviews, RIDE will provide plenty of opportunity for LEA input and perspective.
- Ideally, there will be some schools in every district ready to go in the first waves.

### **Is RIDE evaluating the LEAs?**

- RIDE is reviewing information submitted by the LEAs to determine the order of implementation. The process takes many factors into account, including current level of technology in the classroom, IT staffing, need, and the district's commitment to promoting use of technology in their curriculum.
- The evaluation of the above is only to determine implementation sequence, not level of funding



# Questions & Answers

## ABOUT VENDORS

### **How do LEAs engage vendors?**

- Once the MPA containing the list of qualified vendors is posted, individual school districts must contact a minimum of 3 vendors off the list.
- LEAs are encouraged to do their own research on the vendors, so that they might pick vendors qualified to work with the same or compatible brand of hardware they are currently using.
- All surveys must be completed and quotes submitted to RIDE within 30 days of the LEA's first contact with a vendor.

### **Who makes the decision on vendors?**

- After all sealed surveys/quotes are submitted to RIDE, the district's IT manager and PMO will meet at RIDE to review the vendor submissions and decide which vendor to recommend to the local school committee for approval.



## Questions & Answers

### ABOUT VENDORS

#### **How do vendors determine order of site surveys?**

- Vendors will propose an implementation plan along with their bid. Their proposal will include their capacity for doing work, including concurrent implementations.
- The ultimate sequencing is based on vendor input, and collaboration between the LEAs and the RIDE PMO.

#### **What if the primary technology integration vendor that we use isn't on the final WCI approved vendor list but is on another State MPA. Can we still use them?**

- No. If a vendor is not on the MPA, then they may not be contacted directly for surveys, quotes, work, etc. They are, however able to subcontract through an approved vendor. Preference should be shown for RI-based vendors.



## Questions & Answers

### ABOUT STAFFING & SUPPORT

#### **What if The LEA doesn't have internal IT resources?**

- If an LEA doesn't have its own IT resources, assistance will be available from the RIDE PMO.
- As a practical matter, especially post WCI, every LEA should contract with or hire adequate staff to support its IT needs.

#### **What is the recommended plan moving forward to sustain the wireless infrastructure?**

- As with any enterprise IT environment, each LEA should have staff (full time, part time, or external contractors) fully trained in the support, maintenance, and troubleshooting of the wireless solution.