

RIDE RITEAF and Internet Access Facts Sheet



RITEAF digital data lines:



RIDE awards every eligible K-12 school and library in Rhode Island a digital data line that can communicate with schools within a district and with the Internet.

RITEAF is a State surcharge that provides a pool of dollars used in combination with the Federal E-rate program to fund the purchase of these lines.

RIDE is charged with managing the bid process to acquire these lines and fairly allocate them to every school and library in Rhode Island.

RIDE's allocation of these lines for the 2009-10 school year was based on the following decision criteria;

- Financial impact on the RITEAF pool (e.g., biggest line for the least cost)
- Ensuring no school realized a reduction in the size of their line awarded in 2008-09
- If a district requested an increase in the size of a line at one of their schools for the 2008-09 school year but the

request was denied, then that request was honored for the 2009-10 school year

- A minimum baseline was established for every elementary and secondary school within a district. Every elementary school was awarded a minimum of a 3mb line and every secondary school was awarded a minimum of a 10mb line
- The award assumed that every district “cloud” would migrate from a hub and spoke configuration to a virtually routed cloud

Why a virtually routed cloud? To increase the total useable Internet access capacity for districts and to maximize the size of lines for each school site. In a hub and spoke design there is a big line at the hub (e.g., a district high school) and multiple spokes (e.g., the district elementary and middle schools). All traffic between the schools and the Internet must flow through the hub. In a virtually routed cloud the Internet traffic is routed directly to a central hub (RINET) and the Internet. This eliminates the requirement to have all Internet traffic travel in and out of the hub. This reduction of data traffic on the hub line allows RIDE to reduce the size and cost of the hub line. These savings can then be spread amongst the spokes to increase the size of those lines and the total useable bandwidth within the district.

For example:

2008-09 Barrington School District (hub & spoke)

- (1) Hub line: 30mb at the middle school
- (6) Spoke lines: 5mb at every other site

2009-10 Barrington School District (virtual cloud)

(1) 20mb line at the middle school

(6) 10mb lines at every other site

This year Barrington has a 60mb of total capacity, some of which is wasted by Internet data flowing in and out of the hub while there are only 5mb lines at the “spoke” sites. In a virtual model Barrington has 80mb of total useable capacity and has 10mb lines at the old spoke sites that improve their ability to support intranet applications and services.

RIDE has established an appeal process for any district that requested increases in the size of their lines for the 2009-10 school year that were not awarded and for any district that may have a technical limitation that would require a delay to adopt the virtual cloud configuration until the 2010-11 school year. These appeals must be submitted by January 16, 2009 in writing and contain the specific nature of the appeal with details explaining why the appeal should be granted. All appeals will be decided on and announced by January 23, 2009.

RIDE's Internet access award to RINET:

RIDE is authorized to prepare an RFP on behalf of all the K-12 schools and libraries in the State of Rhode Island to allow the purchase of Internet access in compliance with the Federal E-rate program.

RIDE awarded the bid to RINET. RINET has provided this service for the last ten years and offers a suite of Internet-related services tailored to the K-12 and library communities. RINET's Internet service is bundled in a manner that allows the entire service fee to be eligible for E-rate funding support. RINET also supports the interoperability of the state-wide network created by RITEAF lines which facilitate access to multiple educational technology programs.

RIDE's bid request included a multi-year contract option. RINET's bid response offered both a standard 1-year contract for Internet access services and a 3-year "FLEXNET" service contract. The 3-year service contract was specifically designed to match the Internet access service with the RITEAF line contract in the event that RIDE awarded multi-year contracts.

RINET sought to provide "value" beyond its standard suite of services in return for a longer term contract commitment. RINET's multi-year contract offers rate stability and additional Internet access capacity. Specifically, if an existing RINET member contracts to purchase Internet services at their 2008-09 revenue commitment, then RINET will guarantee that rate for 3 years and increase their Internet access capacity by 100% beginning July 1,

2009. RINET choose this design because of its low cost of acquiring additional Internet access bandwidth and its fixed cost model of bundling services and operating the state-net.

FLEXNET ensures that member's Internet access capacity can expand at rates above their historical growth patterns (70% over the last 3 years) without needing to ask their financial decision makers for more funding.

RIDE's adoption of the virtual cloud district complements the additional Internet access available under the FLEXNET option. However, for those districts that remain in a hub and spoke configuration during the 2009-10 school year, the hub will be increased in capacity to accommodate FLEXNET. All non-district (e.g., direct connects) RINET members have been allocated lines that can support the FLEXNET option if they decide to choose that option.