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Funding Status – FY 2020 and FY 2021

FY 2020:

Wave 38 for FY 2020 was released on Thursday, January 14th, for a total of $29.2 million including $106 thousand for one North Carolina applicant. Cumulative commitments are $2.12 billion including $72.0 million for North Carolina. Nationwide, USAC has now funded 96% of the FY 2020 applications representing 76% of the requested funding.

FY 2021:

USAC opened the FY 2021 Form 471 application window last Friday, January 15th. The window will close on Thursday, March 25th, at 11:59 p.m. EDT. For additional information on the FY 2021 application window, see the USAC Special Edition Schools and Libraries News Brief dated December 22, 2020 and last Friday's USAC News Brief referenced below.

2020 Universal Service Monitoring Report

The FCC released the 2020 version of its annual Universal Service Monitoring Report crammed with statistics on the Universal Service Fund ("USF"). The key E-rate statistics are in the Schools and Libraries section (pp. 47-50) including Table 4.2 showing a state-by-state breakdown of funds committed and disbursed from the program's inception through June 30, 2020. As expected, total funds committed exceeded funds disbursed by 29% nationwide but by only 19% in North Carolina.

Considering USF in its entirety, Table 1.9 shows aggregate Fund payments vs. contributions by state for calendar 2019. In total, the payments and contributions basically balance out, but state-to-state variations are huge — largely dependent upon the mix of urban and rural areas and the extent of High Cost support payments. North Carolina, for example, received $1.00 in benefits for every $1.44 it paid into the Fund.

E-Rate Updates and Reminders

Upcoming E-Rate Dates:

January 22   Form 486 deadline for FY 2020 covering funding committed in Wave 22. More generally, the Form 486 deadline is 120 days from the FCDL date or

the service start date (typically July 1st), whichever is later. Upcoming Form 486 deadlines are:

Wave 23	01/29/2021
Wave 24	02/05/2021
Wave 25	02/12/2021
Wave 26	02/19/2021
Wave 27	02/26/2021

January 25   Comment deadline on the FCC's Emergency Broadband Benefit ("EBB") program. Reply comments are due by February 16th. See our newsletters of December 28th and January 11th.

January 27   First in a series of USAC "Open Hour" webinars initially covering the FY 2021 Eligible Services List (see links in the USAC News Brief reference below). Subsequent webinars will be held on February 3rd and February 17th.

March 25   The FY 2021 Form 471 application window will close at 11:59 p.m. EDT.

USAC News Brief Dated January 15 – Preparing for the FY 2021 Application Window

USAC's Schools and Libraries News Brief of January 15, 2021, discusses the steps that an applicant should take if it: (a) has not accessed EPC in the last six months; (b) has just started the FY 2021 application process by filing a Form 470; or (c), has already completed the competitive bidding process and signed a contract(s).

The News Brief also announces webinars on Eligible Services, Form 470 and Competitive Bidding, and Service Provider Selection and the Form 471.