- Funding Status for E-Rate and ECF
    - E-Rate for FY 2022
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- BEAR System Changes and EPC Account Administrator Updates
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Funding Status for E-Rate and ECF

E-Rate for FY 2022:

Wave 30 for FY 2022 was issued on Thursday, November 10th, for $19.8 million none for North Carolina. Cumulative commitments to date are $2.68 billion including $66.1 million for North Carolina. Nationwide, USAC has funded 97.0% of the FY 2022 applications representing 88.8% of the requested funding.

ECF for 2021-2023:

Total commitments for all three ECF windows are $6.28 billion including $176 million for North Carolina. Total disbursements as of last Friday were $2.18 billion.

BEAR System Changes and EPC Account Administrator Updates

For many applicants, the individuals designated as the Account Administrators in EPC play little role in the ongoing E-rate process. The administrators may only access EPC when users need to be added or deleted or when permissions need to be set or changed. Unfortunately, when such changes need to be made, we often find that the Account Administrators of record are no longer in a position to do so. Updating the Account Administrators in those situations takes extra time and effort by others.

We raise this issue now, not only because we are in the midst of the E-rate administrative window, but because USAC is about to transition the BEAR process into EPC. Once this transition occurs — expected in December — individuals currently authorized within the existing BEAR processing system will be able to create and/or certify BEARs only within EPC. Post-transition, EPC is expected to have separate fields for "472 Permission" as shown below.

#11111 - ABC SCHOOL DISTRICT

Summary   Customer Service   Modifications   Additional Information   Discount Rate   Category Two Budget   Contracts   FCC Forms   FRN Appeals   News   **Related Actions**

Manage User Permissions

Organization Details

Name	ABC SCHOOL DISTRICT	FCC Registration Number	11111
Address	123 Main Street SPRINGFIELD, NY 11111 New York	Organization Type	Applicant
Mailing Address	123 Main Street SPRINGFIELD, NY 11111 New York	Phone Number	111-111-1111
		Email	

User Permissions

In the table below, you can designate the permissions that you wish to give to each of your users for the various tasks you can complete in the portal. This table will continue to grow as more functionality comes online.

- Full rights users can start, complete, submit and certify forms.
- Partial rights user can start and enter data in the form, but cannot submit and certify them.
- View Only users can only see forms created by other people in your organization but cannot create forms themselves.
- Form 498 School or Library Officials can start, complete, submit, certify, modify, and deactivate Forms 498.
- Form 498 General Financial Contacts can start, complete, and submit Forms 498, but cannot certify new or updated Forms 498 or deactivate existing Forms 498.
- Post-Commitment Full and Partial rights user can start, complete, and submit Spin Change and Service Substitution requests. Post-Commitment View Only rights can view the submitted Spin Change and Service Substitution requests.
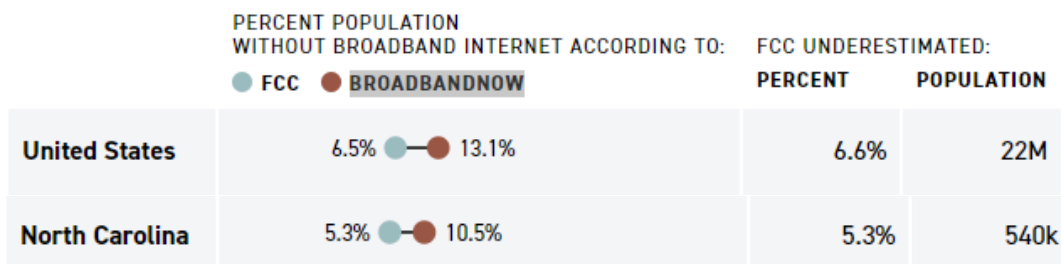
Name	Email	Apply All	470 Permission	471 Permission	472 Permission	498 Permission	Post-Commitment Permission	486 Permission	Appeals Permission
Althea Smith	asmith@ABCschooldistrict.net		Full	Full	Full	School or Library Official	Full	Full	Full
ROBERT SMITH	rob@ABCschooldistrict.net		Full	Full	Full	No Access	Full	Full	Full

CANCEL   SUBMIT

We understand that USAC will attempt to carry-forward existing BEAR system users into EPC to give them equivalent permissions but that is clearly something that applicants will want to check. Existing BEAR system users may have to be added into EPC as users and be assigned BEAR permissions. This can only be done by the applicants' EPC Account Administrators — hence our suggestion that all applicants confirm and/or update their Account Administrator designations now.

FCC Broadband Mapping Controversy

In many of the most rural areas of the country, E-rate can help bring down school and library costs for internet access, but only to the extent that local infrastructures can support high-speed broadband services. Broadband in unserved or under-served areas remains expensive or unavailable altogether. COVID-era legislation, including the Infrastructure Act, is set to provide billions of dollars designed to close the nation's digital divide, but only to the extent that those funds are properly targeted to the most deserving states. As might be expected, this is leading to major controversies being played out in broadband mapping data.

At the heart of the controversy is the FCC's Fixed Broadband Deployment map that many states and other organizations believe relies too heavily on carrier-provided reporting and, as such, dramatically overstates existing coverage. One alternative source of data is the National Broadband Map developed by BroadbandNow. Nationwide, or by state, the two maps show differences of the following magnitude:

	PERCENT POPULATION WITHOUT BROADBAND INTERNET ACCORDING TO:		FCC UNDERESTIMATED:	
	● FCC ● BROADBANDNOW		PERCENT	POPULATION
United States	6.5% ●—● 13.1%		6.6%	22M
North Carolina	5.3% ●—● 10.5%		5.3%	540k

Later this week, the FCC plans to "unveil a pre-production draft of new broadband maps" that may resolve some of the differences in coverage but is unlikely to quell the controversy.

One outgrowth of this controversy is a growing sense of competition between states for the allocation of federal broadband funding. The best prepared states — including North Carolina — are those that have already begun investing in broadband and that have developed their own mapping programs. North Carolina, for example, has developed a self-reporting tool that allows residents to document their internet speeds and can be used to challenge the FCC data.

Updates and Reminders

Upcoming Dates:

November 18   The Form 486 deadline for FY 2022 Wave 14. More generally, the Form 486 deadline is 120 days from the FCDL date or from the service start date (typically July 1st), whichever is later. Upcoming Form 486 deadlines are:

Wave 15	11/25/2022
Wave 16	12/02/2022
Wave 17	12/09/2022
Wave 18	12/16/2022
Wave 19	12/23/2022
Wave 20	12/30/2022