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Funding Status for E-Rate and ECF

E-Rate for FY 2023:

USAC issued Wave 4 for FY 2023 on Thursday, May 18th, for \$62.2 million including \$1.49 million for fifteen North Carolina applicants. Total funding after four waves is \$1.20 billion including \$33.6 million for North Carolina. At this point, USAC has already funded 71.7% of the originally submitted applications representing 39.7% of the dollars requested.

In a [Public Notice](#) released last Friday, the FCC directed USAC to fully fund all valid Category 1 and Category 2 funding requests for FY 2023. With a funding cap of \$4.768 billion, plus an additional \$250 million in roll-over funding, and a USAC demand estimate of only \$2.944 billion — not to mention the four funding waves already released — the announcement was a mere formality.

ECF for 2021-2023:

Total commitments for all three ECF windows are \$6.67 billion including \$189 million for North Carolina. Nationwide, USAC has funded 87.9% of the ECF applications representing 68.0% of the requested funding. Window 3 applications are being funded down to the 65% rural band. Total disbursements as of May 11th were \$3.17 billion.

Updates and Reminders

Upcoming Dates:

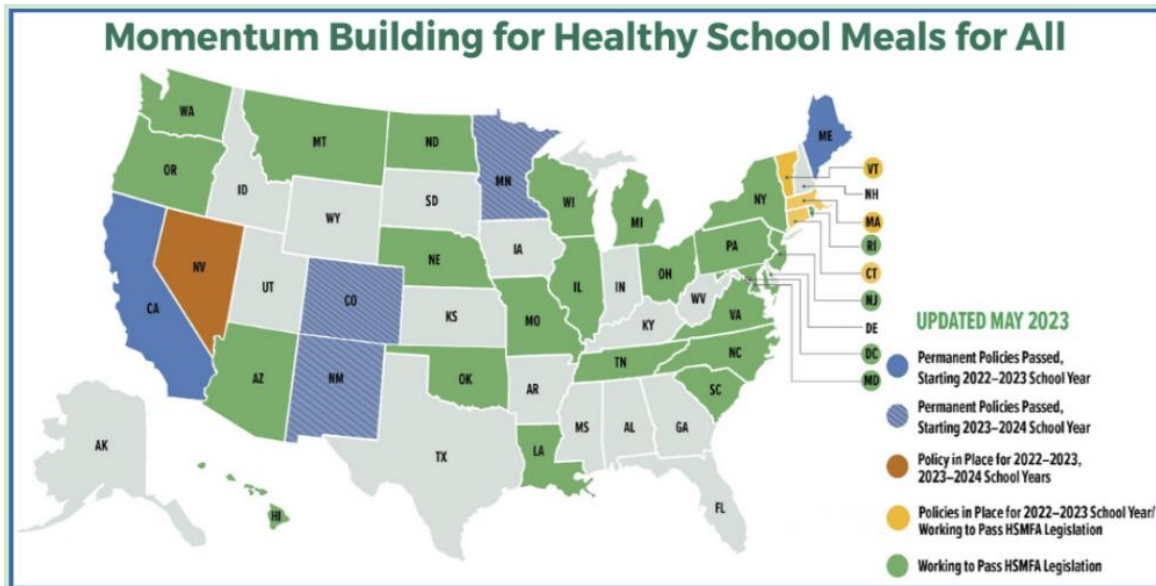
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| May 23 | Due date for submitting reply comments on the FCC’s Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FCC 23-10) to further improve E-rate program rules and encourage greater Tribal and small applicant participation in the E-rate program (see our newsletter of February 6th). |
| May 26 | The Form 486 deadline for FY 2022 Wave 41. More generally, the Form 486 deadline is 120 days from the FCDL date or from the service start date (typically July 1 st), whichever is later. Upcoming Form 486 deadlines are: |

Wave 42	06/02/2023
Wave 43	06/09/2023
Wave 44	06/16/2023
Wave 45	06/23/2023
Wave 46	06/30/2023

- May 26 Beginning of the summer deferral period for PIA inquiries. The deferral period ends September 8, 2023.
- June 30 The last day to light fiber (or request an extension) for special construction projects from FY 2022.

Proposed “Free School Meals for All” Legislation:

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (“USDA”) issued waivers to provide free school meals to all students regardless of household income, but that program expired this year. In response, a growing number of states have enacted legislation, on their own, to extend free meals for all, either permanently or at least for the coming 2023-2024 school year. The following table shows the status of free meals being provided nationwide.



Source: [Food Research & Action Center \(“FRAC”\)](#)

As a more permanent and broadly based measure, Senators Bernie Sanders (I-VT) and Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), and Representatives Ilhan Omar (D-MN) and Gwen Moore (D-WI), have introduced the [Universal School Meals Program Act of 2023](#) (S. 1568/H.R. 3204), which aims to provide free school meals to all schoolchildren nationwide. The bills would also increase the reimbursement rate for schools; provide additional incentives for local procurement; reimburse schools for all delinquent school meal debt; and provide summer meal service.

Newsletter information and disclaimer: This newsletter may contain unofficial information on prospective E-rate developments and/or may reflect E-Rate Central's own interpretations of E-rate practices and regulations. Such information is provided for planning and guidance purposes only. It is not meant, in any way, to supplant official announcements and instructions provided by USAC, the FCC, or NCDPI.

Additional North Carolina specific E-rate information is available through our Web site — <http://www.e-ratecentral.com/us/stateInformation.asp?state=NC>. Note that this site provides easy access to formatted North Carolina applicant E-rate histories via the Billed Entity Number (“BEN”) search mechanism in the upper left-hand corner. Detailed information can be obtained by “drilling down” using the links for specific funding years and individual FRNs.

If you have received this newsletter from a colleague and you would like to receive your own copy of the North Carolina E-Rate Forum, send an email to join-ncerate@lists.dpi.state.nc.us. Please include your name, organization, telephone, and e-mail address.

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