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## Funding Status

### *E-Rate for FY 2024 – The Application Window is Closed:*

The Form 471 filing window for FY 2024 closed last Wednesday, March 27<sup>th</sup>. Preliminary demand, as reflected in the “In Window” applications certified by the deadline, 11:59 p.m. EDT Wednesday night showed:

	<u>No. Applications</u>	<u>Funding Requested</u>
Nationwide	35,227	\$ 3,234 Million
Category 1	22,849	1,917 Million
Category 2	12,378	1,317 Million
North Carolina	587	\$ 87.7 Million

Total initial demand for FY 2024 is up roughly 10% from FY 2023 but remains well below the year’s \$4.94 billion funding cap set last month by the FCC. Total demand is somewhat of a moving target, initially increasing as the FCC grants waivers on late-filed applicants certified within two weeks of the window close, then decreasing as pending requests are reduced during the PIA review process. Overall, as we have seen in previous years, we expect total demand will be closer to \$3 billion.

A more interesting factor to track will be the Category 2 demand. As discussed in our [newsletter of March 18<sup>th</sup>](#), the total funding cap of \$4.94 billion for FY 2024 actually has two components. The Category 1 cap for FY 2024 is \$3.70 billion, well above the initial demand level. The Category 2 cap, however, is only \$1.24 billion, currently slightly below the \$1.32 billion demand. While it may be close, we expect that final Category 2 demand will ultimately fall below this year’s cap.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Should that **not** occur, there is an escape clause (footnote #162) in the Modernization Order ([FCC 14-99](#)) that “does not preclude the possibility” of spending more than the Category 2 cap after the Category 1 demand has been met. This option was reiterated in the Second Modernization Order ([FCC 14-189](#), footnote #306) allowing the Wireline Competition Bureau “to direct the Administrator to use any remaining funds to provide support for category two requests.”

The new element in Category 1 demand this year will be funding requests for school bus Wi-Fi equipment and services. Our preliminary estimate of demand, derived primarily from those FRNs specifying “bus Wi-Fi” in their nicknames as instructed by USAC, indicates demand of \$30.0 million including \$880 thousand for North Carolina.

*E-Rate for FY 2023:*

USAC issued Wave 49 for FY 2023 on Thursday, March 28<sup>th</sup>, for \$1.69 million, none for North Carolina. Total funding remains \$2.60 billion including \$84.7 million for North Carolina. At this point, USAC has funded 98.0% of the originally submitted applications representing 93.8% of the dollars requested.

**Updates and Reminders**

*Upcoming Dates:*

- April 5            Form 486 deadline for FY 2023 Wave 33. More generally, the Form 486 deadline is 120 days from the FCDL date or from the service start date (typically July 1<sup>st</sup>), whichever is later. Upcoming Form 486 deadlines are:
  - Wave 34                      04/12/2024
  - Wave 35                      04/19/2024
  - Wave 36                      04/26/2024
  
- April 10            Two weeks after the March 27<sup>th</sup> close of the FY 2024 application window. Traditionally, the FCC has routinely granted out-of-window waivers for all late-filed Form 471 applications filed and certified within two weeks of the window close without a requirement to show an “extraordinary” reason for the delay.
  
- April 18            USAC webinar on Program Integrity Assurance (“PIA”) and Selective Reviews ([registration](#)).
  
- June 30            Last day to receive FY 2023 recurring services and all ECF Window 3 services.
  
- August 29            Invoice deadline for ECF Window 3 applications.

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*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.*

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