



- Funding Status
  - E-Rate for FY 2024
- Updates and Reminders
  - Upcoming Dates
  - Bans on Student Cellphone Usage in School

## Funding Status

### *E-Rate for FY 2024:*

Wave 17 for FY 2024 was released on Thursday, August 15<sup>th</sup>, for \$39.6 million including \$376 thousand for six North Carolina applicants. Total funding is now \$2.00 billion including \$57.3 million for North Carolina. Currently, USAC has funded 90.5% of the originally submitted applications, representing 66.4% of the dollars requested.

## Updates and Reminders

### *Upcoming Dates:*

- |           |  |         |            |         |            |
|-----------|--|---------|------------|---------|------------|
| August 20 | USAC webinar to review the information to be required in the Cybersecurity Pilot’s initial application, the Form 484 Part One ( <a href="#">registration</a> ).  |         |            |         |            |
| August 22 | Introductory USAC webinar for service providers new to the E-rate program ( <a href="#">registration</a> ).  |         |            |         |            |
| August 23 | Form 486 deadline for FY 2023 Wave 53. More generally, the Form 486 deadline is 120 days from the FCDL date, or the service start date (typically July 1 <sup>st</sup> ), whichever is later. Upcoming Form 486 deadlines are: <table border="0" style="margin-left: 40px; width: 60%;"> <tr> <td>Wave 54</td> <td>09/09/2024</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wave 55</td> <td>09/23/2024</td> </tr> </table> <p>The first Form 486 deadline for FY 2024, for applicants funded on or before July 1<sup>st</sup>, will be October 29<sup>th</sup>.</p> | Wave 54 | 09/09/2024 | Wave 55 | 09/23/2024 |
| Wave 54   | 09/09/2024   |         |            |         |            |
| Wave 55   | 09/23/2024   |         |            |         |            |
| August 27 | USAC webinar with an overview of the Open Data system ( <a href="#">registration</a> ).  |         |            |         |            |
| August 29 | USAC Open Data training webinar on creating reports and visualizations ( <a href="#">registration</a> ).   |         |            |         |            |
| August 29 | Invoice deadline for ECF Window 3 applications. <sup>1</sup>   |         |            |         |            |

---

<sup>1</sup> The government funding bill passed in March 2024 rescinds \$1.768 billion from the ECF program. As a result, the FCC and USAC are now prevented from processing post-commitment requests to change service providers or invoicing methods, approving a commitment if an appeal or waiver is granted, or making upward commitment adjustments to resolve errors (see [USAC’s ECF Newsletter for June](#)).

August 30 Due date for public comments on the FCC’s proposed Eligible Services List (“ESL”) for FY 2025 ([DA 24-743](#)). Reply comments are due September 16<sup>th</sup>.

### *Bans on Student Cellphone Usage in School:*

Last year, Florida passed a law requiring public schools to bar students from using personal wireless devices like smartphones during class time. So far, three other states — Indiana, Louisiana, and South Carolina — have followed Florida’s lead, with other states adopting policies to limit cellphones in schools, at a minimum, barring their usage in class. According to a recent article in the [New York Times](#), other states are moving in a similar direction including:

- Delaware and Pennsylvania have allotted funds to purchase lockable phone pouches. As an alternative, Amazon, as but one example, is selling a classroom, lockable, cellphone cabinet for \$45.95.



- Ohio, Minnesota, and Virginia schools have been directed to develop cellphone-free education policies.
- Governors in California and New York are pushing state lawmakers on legislation to limit cellphone usage in schools.
- Individual schools and school districts are adopting their own policies to limit in-class usage.

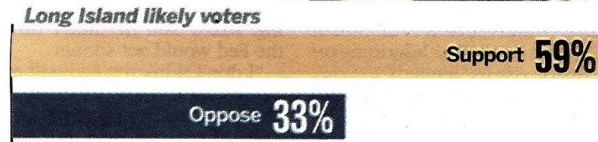
Support for cellphone-limiting policies or outright bans is coming from teachers, particularly in the upper grades. A [study](#) earlier this year by the Pew Research Center found that “72% of high school teachers say students being distracted by their cellphones in the classroom is a major problem.”

A majority of parents — 70% in one study — seem to agree that cellphone usage should be banned during classes but many believe that cellphone access is important outside of class during the school day. A more recent study in Long Island, where E-Rate Central is headquartered, showed a majority of parents agreed with classroom bans.

### USING PHONES IN CLASS

Do you support or oppose public schools prohibiting students from having smart phones in classrooms?

NEWSDAVI CONRAD  
WILLIAMS JR.



© Newsday

E-Rate Central is quick to acknowledge the disruptive effect that personal wireless devices can have in a live classroom environment. On the flip side, however, we remain a strong supporter of school bus Wi-Fi as a means of extending study hall learning activities beyond the normal school day. The E-rate eligibility of bus Wi-Fi was approved by the FCC rather late in the E-rate cycle for FY 2024. We expect — and support — greater adoption of school bus Wi-Fi in FY 2025.

---

*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](mailto:join-ncerate@lists.dpi.state.nc.us). Please include your name, organization, telephone, and e-mail address.*

*In compliance with federal law, the NC Department of Public Instruction administers all state-operated educational programs, employment activities and admissions without discrimination because of race, religion, national or ethnic origin, color, age, military service, disability, or gender, except where exemption is appropriate and allowed by law.*