

Keeping up with the E-Rate

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FCC

While the Federal Communications Commission has the final word on all things E-Rate, they do not have much information in a user-friendly format. Perhaps the most useful page from the FCC website is: www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/e-rate-schools-libraries-usf-program. It has useful links, and a list of appeal decisions.

USAC

The USAC website is full of good information, and it has gotten easier to find. Here are some of the important pages:

E-Rate home page: www.universalservice.org/sl/

Note that on that page, above the picture of the library books is a purple bar that says “APPLICANTS.” That is actually a button that will show you the steps of the application process, with links to more information from there.

Questions: www.slforms.universalservice.org/EMailResponse/EMail_Intro.aspx

You can submit a question to USAC from that link. The interface is a little clunky, but you can get a written response to questions.

For more information on the USAC Website, see On-Tech’s presentation “Using the USAC Website”: <http://on-tech.com/presentations/USACwebsite.pdf>

Weekly News Brief

One excellent way to keep up to date on the E-Rate program is to subscribe to the News Brief. Every Friday, USAC sends out an email with updates on funding, and a short article on an E-Rate topic.

To subscribe, go to: www.usac.org/about/tools/publications/subscription-center.aspx

To see back issues, go to: www.usac.org/sl/tools/news-briefs/Default.aspx

Annual applicant training

Every year in the autumn, USAC offers in-person training in a variety of locations. If you subscribe to the News Brief, you will be notified when the next year’s training dates and locations are set. To see where and when training was held in 2013, and to look at the training materials, go to: www.usac.org/about/tools/TrainingArchive/SeriesDetails.aspx?ID=133.

Unfortunately, the training materials are only PowerPoint slides, but they can be informative.

Colorado Department of Education

The state has a variety of E-Rate resources available.

E-Rate overview: www.cde.state.co.us/edtech/erate2.htm

Technology planning: www.cde.state.co.us/cdelib/technology/erate.htm

The CDE also publishes the NSLP (school lunch) data you will need for Block 4. The URL for that data changes each year, so check with the CDE.

American Library Association

The ALA has a great deal of information about the E-Rate. Here is a list of some of their useful pages.

Overview: www.ala.org/advocacy/telecom/erate

CIPA: www.ala.org/advocacy/advleg/federallegislation/cipa/

Filtering scenarios: www.ala.org/advocacy/advleg/federallegislation/cipa/cipascenarios

On-Tech

The On-Tech website has information about the E-Rate program, including a summary significant FCC decisions.

Presentations

The handouts from all the Webinars in this series, as well as from other presentations from around the country are at: on-tech.com/presentations/.

Blog

I also have a blog, but it is aimed at E-Rate insiders. Like most blogs, it does not cover the E-Rate in any methodical way; it is just commentary on some aspect of the E-Rate that amused, interested or outraged me. blog.on-tech.com/

Webinars

We will continue to offer Webinars on E-Rate topics, and we'll send invitations to you when we give them.

E-Rate Central

E-Rate Central has several useful resources. www.e-ratecentral.com/default.asp

They have a weekly newsletter: www.e-ratecentral.com/subscribe.asp

You may be able to find a link to current Colorado NSLP data at:

www.e-ratecentral.com/us/nationalSites.asp?cat=nslp

Colorado state info: www.e-ratecentral.com/us/stateInformation.asp?state=CO

In the upper left-hand corner of that page, you can put in your library's entity number (BEN), and see a funding history for your library.