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For Immediate Release

**FCC OPENS SECOND E-RATE APPLICATION WINDOW
FOR FUNDING YEAR 2020**

Will Address Schools' Additional On-Campus Bandwidth Needs Due to COVID-19

WASHINGTON, September 16, 2020—The Federal Communications Commission's Wireline Competition Bureau today announced the opening of a second funding year 2020 filing window to allow schools to request additional E-Rate funding specifically to address increased on-campus bandwidth needs. Schools across the United States continue to face unprecedented disruptions and challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As the school year begins, many school districts are relying on remote learning, either in whole or in part, to educate students. This heightened reliance on remote learning, as well as social distancing in schools providing in-person instruction, has dramatically increased demand on school networks, creating an urgent need for additional on-campus bandwidth this school year.

During this second filing window, schools will be able to purchase additional bandwidth for this academic year to address needs resulting from the increasing shift to 1:1 student-to-device ratios in classrooms, live streaming of classroom instruction to students at home, and expanding use of cloud-based educational tools and platforms—all of which can significantly increase on-campus bandwidth requirements. The second filing window will open upon publication of the Order in the Federal Register and close on October 16, 2020.

“Across the country, students have started a new school year where connectivity is proving to be more critical than ever before, and many schools require additional bandwidth to meet the increased demand,” said FCC Chairman Ajit Pai. “Providing a new E-Rate funding application window will help schools meet this demand and is another important step in our efforts to support our nation's students and teachers.”

Earlier this year, the FCC quickly announced extensions of key E-Rate service implementation and filing deadlines to provide relief to program participants affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. It also waived the program's gift rules to enable service providers to offer, and E-Rate program participants to solicit and accept, improved connections or additional equipment for remote learning during the coronavirus outbreak. And the Commission has partnered with the Department of Education to promote the use of \$16 billion in available funding for remote learning from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES) Act's Education Stabilization Fund, which several jurisdictions have already taken advantage of.

Under the E-Rate program, eligible schools may request universal service discounts for eligible services, including connections necessary to support broadband connectivity to school “classrooms.” Consistent with the relief the Commission has previously provided to schools affected by natural disasters, the Bureau has adopted temporary rules to provide immediate relief to schools that participate in the E-Rate program as they continue to contend with the

ongoing disruptions caused by the pandemic.

For more information on the FCC's E-Rate program, visit <https://www.fcc.gov/general/e-rate-schools-libraries-usf-program>.

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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).