

Top 5 Things to Know About the FCC Cybersecurity Pilot Program



The Schools and Libraries Cybersecurity Pilot Program is set to provide significant support for enhancing the cybersecurity of educational institutions and libraries. Here are the top five things you need to know about this program right now:

1 Significant Funding Over Three Years

The Pilot Program will provide up to \$200 million over a three-year term to selected participants. This funding aims to support a wide variety of cybersecurity services and equipment to protect school and library broadband networks and data.

2 Modeled After the Connected Care Pilot

The program is modeled after the FCC's Connected Care Pilot. It aims to evaluate the effectiveness of using Universal Service funding for cybersecurity services and equipment, with the potential for these measures to be funded permanently based on the outcomes.

3 Eligibility Criteria

Schools, libraries, and consortia of schools and libraries that meet E-Rate program eligibility requirements can apply. Notably, applicants do not need to be current or former E-Rate program participants to be eligible for the Pilot Program.

4 Eligible Services and Equipment

Participants can seek reimbursement for a wide range of cybersecurity services and equipment, subject to overall cap. Eligible items include:

- **Advanced/Next-Generation Firewalls:** Crucial for protecting networks from external threats
- **Endpoint Protection:** Ensures devices connected to the network are secure
- **Identity Protection and Authentication:** Safeguards network access by verifying user identities
- **Monitoring, Detection, and Response:** Provides continuous surveillance to detect and respond to cybersecurity threats

5 Application Process

The application process will be conducted in two parts:

- **Part One:** Applicants will provide general information about their institutions and proposed projects, including goals, expected outcomes, and anticipated cybersecurity risks to be addressed.
- **Part Two:** For selected participants, this part will require detailed information about current cybersecurity measures, history of cyber threats, and training policies.

The FCC plans to open the Pilot Program application window this Fall. Selected participants will be announced via Public Notice, detailing next steps including the competitive bidding process for procuring services and equipment.

As we prepare for the Schools and Libraries Cybersecurity Pilot Program, keep these key points in mind. This initiative represents a significant opportunity to bolster the cybersecurity of our educational institutions and libraries. Stay tuned for more updates and detailed information as the application process unfolds.



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As a Cisco Premier Partner, Xceptional is here to lend a hand with everything from designing and implementing Cisco solutions to managing them long-term. Our expertise goes beyond just technical solutions – we also provide guidance on how to make the most of funding programs like E-Rate, making sure your IT plans stay comfortably within your budget.

Partnering with Xceptional means more than just accessing top-tier technology support. We're committed to being your partner for all your IT needs. We'll walk alongside you every step of the way, ensuring that your organization's IT operations run smoothly. Because when you succeed, your staff and students do too. Let Xceptional empower your organization to achieve its highest potential.