



NEWS RELEASE

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Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Turns to *E-rate Manager for Applicants* for Assistance with E-rate Program

Online Suite of Tools Helps Districts Obtain Funding to Support Educational Technology

EDMOND, OKLA. (Oct. 7, 2009) – In 2008, through the E-rate program, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools received more than \$1 million in funding for vital telecommunications services such as phone and Internet connections. *E-rate Manager for Applicants*, an online suite of tools developed by Funds For Learning, LLC, played a key role in helping the district track and manage the E-rate program.

As districts such as Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools increase their deployment of educational technology in the classroom, the cost of building and maintaining the required infrastructure to support this technology continues to rise. More than 30,000 schools and libraries apply for E-rate funding every year, with about 90 percent receiving the assistance they need to provide telecommunications services and Internet access.

“E-rate funding helps sustain the use of technology in our classrooms,” said Marlene Cousen, Assistant Director, Information and Support for Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. “The use of technology enables a 21st century mode of instruction, providing long-range benefits to our students.”

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools relies on *E-rate Manager for Applicants* for assistance with its E-rate funding requests and commitments. The online suite of tools enables the district to stay current with fluctuating deadlines and paperwork, and to navigate the process of preparing and filing the required forms. *E-rate Manager for Applicants* features form wizards that ask simple, straightforward questions to guide applicants in preparing Form 470 and Form 471.

“Applying for E-rate funding is a year-round process that’s both difficult and time consuming,” said Cousen. “Three years ago we began using *E-rate Manager for Applicants*, which has made the entire process much easier. *E-rate Manager for Applicants* provides us with the knowledge and resources we need to successfully manage the E-rate program year after year.”

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In 2006, the State Education Department in North Carolina purchased more than 100 licenses to *E-rate Manager for Applicants*, with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools being one of the recipients. State officials recognized that schools needed access to a resource designed specifically to track, manage and assess the E-rate program, and to address the equally important issue of compliance documentation, as the FCC and USAC spend additional resources auditing E-rate stakeholders.

“Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools has been selected for an audit before,” said Cousen. “During the process we were able to pull up past documentation through *E-rate Manager for Applicants*, which proved to be extremely helpful when responding to questions from auditors.”

Districts are required to retain all E-rate related documents for five years from the last date they received service on an approved funding commitment. *E-rate Manager for Applicants* offers the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools up to one gigabyte of online storage so that the district can archive important E-rate documents in a secure, off-site location.

E-rate Manager for Applicants is available as an annual subscription-per-user fee based on student population. The price of a year’s subscription starts at \$249.

For more information about *E-rate Manager for Applicants*, visit www.FundsForLearning.com.

About Funds For Learning

Funds For Learning, LLC, is an E-rate compliance firm specializing in guiding E-rate applicants and service providers through the complex and ever-changing E-rate regulatory process. With more than 10 years of experience in providing professional advice and assistance relating to the E-rate program, Funds For Learning exists to provide high-quality solutions for the needs of E-rate stakeholders. The company was established in 1997 and is headquartered in Edmond, Okla. For more information, visit www.FundsForLearning.com or phone 405-341-4140.

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