

ATTACHMENT NO. IX.C: Approval of Group II E-Rate Purchase

Potential motion: Move to approve the of two (2) updated firewalls from Heartland Business Systems with a combination of Federal Group II E-Rate funds and local district funds

Recommended action: Approve as presented

It is recommended that the board approve the purchase of two new firewalls, as presented. This was presented and discussed in the Business Services Committee meeting on both March 10th, 2026 and April 14th, 2026. On April 14th, 2026 the recommendation brought forward from the committee was to approve the purchase of two (2) updated firewalls from Heartland Business Systems with a combination of Group II E-Rate funds and local district funds. All FCC and ILCS requirements for bid and posting were followed.

We currently are running with a single firewall that is outdated and was recently impacted by the storms. This has caused significant interruptions in our internet within district. Continuing to run with only one (1) firewall puts us at risk of having a greater chance of downtime for our internet services and causes additional downtime when updates are required for security and protection. Additionally, the current firewall cannot handle the full bandwidth of internet services we have.

Therefore, it was recommended at the Business Services Meeting on April 14th, 2026 to purchase two firewalls to ensure redundancy, decrease downtime, increase security, and increase our bandwidth for internet services.

The total cost, which includes a three (3) year subscription for security updates and warranty, is \$138,308.99. The breakdown of funding is articulated below.

Federal Group II E-Rate Funding: **\$70,831.77**

Cost to the District with local funds: **\$67,477.22**