



State of New Jersey  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
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November 25, 2014

TO: Chief School Administrators  
Charter School Lead Persons  
School Business Administrators  
Nonpublic School Administrators

FROM: Evo Popoff, Assistant Commissioner/Chief Innovation Officer  
Division of Charter Schools, School Choice, Technology, Turnarounds

SUBJECT: Regional Broadband Purchasing Cooperatives RFP Awards/**Deadline December 12**

As part of the New Jersey Department of Education's (NJDOE) efforts to reduce broadband costs for school districts across the state, we are pleased to inform you that on November 21, 2014, the Middlesex Regional Educational Services Commission (MRESC) announced the results of its Wide Area Network (WAN) and Internet cooperative purchasing initiative (the "Broadband Initiative").

Here is why you should pay attention:

MRESC and its partners, Bergen County Technical Schools and the Educational Information and Resource Center, with the support of the NJDOE, established the Broadband Initiative to improve Internet access for districts and charter and nonpublic schools in every region of the state. In response to the request for proposals (RFP), New Jersey's telecommunications service providers have submitted outstanding proposals that will result in tangible benefits for participating districts and schools.

These benefits could be significant.

If all 400+ districts and schools that indicated interest in the Broadband Initiative by submitting service order forms take part in the awarded RFP contracts, we should see a **300% increase in broadband statewide, while realizing aggregate savings of more than 50%**. While actual savings will vary, many districts and schools could save 50% or more, even while substantially increasing their bandwidth enabling the use of technology to support instruction, collaboration and operations.

To realize these benefits, districts and schools - including those that submitted service order forms - must now officially sign onto the awarded contracts. This week, the MRESC sent emails to every institution eligible to purchase network and Internet services from the Broadband Initiative with information including the next steps for signing onto one of the awarded contracts.

**All districts, charter schools and nonpublic schools in the state are eligible to participate in the Broadband Initiative regardless of where they are located, even if they did not initially submit a service order form and/or have not received an email from MRESC.**

If you did not receive an email and wish to participate in the Broadband initiative, please send an email to [coop@mresc.k12.nj.us](mailto:coop@mresc.k12.nj.us) immediately so you can get the information you require. As described in the email, the MRESK is **seeking confirmation of district and school interest in participating in the Broadband Initiative by December 12th** so vendors can start working with participants before the holidays. This will enable the MRESK to circulate contracts in January and ensure that all contractual arrangements, including any necessary board resolutions, are completed by March.

We understand that you may have lots of questions about this process and the particular services awarded for your school district. The MRESK has a procurement website with additional information, including vendor-specific items and opportunities to attend informational meetings and webinars throughout December. You may contact the MRESK directly with questions at: [coop@mresc.k12.nj.us](mailto:coop@mresc.k12.nj.us) or get information via their website located at: [http://www.mresc.k12.nj.us/pages/Middlesex\\_Regional/News/DRLAP\\_Broadband\\_Component](http://www.mresc.k12.nj.us/pages/Middlesex_Regional/News/DRLAP_Broadband_Component).

This is an exciting project that can benefit students and educators across the state while providing substantial cost savings, and the Department is proud to support the work of the MRESK and its partners. If you have immediate questions regarding the Internet cooperative purchasing initiative, please contact MRESK Business Administrator/Board Secretary Mr. Patrick M. Moran at (732) 777-9848, ext. 3120, or [pmoran@mresc.k12.nj.us](mailto:pmoran@mresc.k12.nj.us).

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c: Members, State Board of Education  
David C. Hesse, Acting Commissioner  
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Executive Directors for Regional Achievement Centers  
Executive County Business Officials  
Charter Schools Office  
County Test Coordinators  
District Test Coordinators  
District PARCC IT Contacts  
Directors of Approved Private Schools for the Disabled  
NJ LEE Group  
Garden State Coalition of Schools