

# 10 Tips to fully maximize your E-rate dollars

Over two decades, many schools and libraries have discovered how to make the most of the E-rate dollars available to them. Here is their input, as well as recommendations from E-rate consulting firm Funds for Learning.

**1 The E-rate program is now stronger than ever!**  
Starting in 2021, \$8B in funding will be available over the next five-year budget cycle.



**2 Understand the 2021 budget for your school.**

Schools/districts:  
(Enrollment) x \$167  
= total pre-discount budget \$ available.

**3 Understand new funding calculation for libraries.**



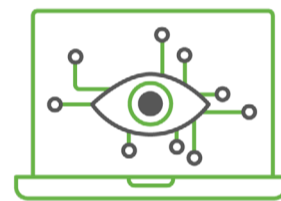
\$4.50 per square foot for all libraries (rural and urban), while the per-site funding "floor" will be increased to \$25,000.

**4 Assess resources and manage application.**



55% of schools and libraries say the application process is getting easier and faster.

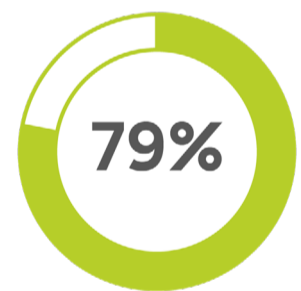
**5 Create a tech vision for your school or library.**



Engage stakeholders, take a step back, and consider the big picture.

**6 Prioritize IT infrastructure needs.**

98% of applicants say their Wi-Fi network is critical to fulfilling their mission. 79% of applicants will need to upgrade their Wi-Fi within three years.



55%

**8 Get to know the E-rate Productivity Center (EPC).**

55% agreed that it took less time to prepare and file applications this last year.

**7 Use a competitive bidding process.**

28 days of open bidding, as cost is the highest-weighted factor.



**9 Identify matching and additional funding sources.**

95% of applicants report that E-rate funds are not sufficient to meet their total needs.



**10 Manage the process year-round.**

Understand the deadlines and document work to stay ahead of the game.