



FORT WAYNE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

July 31, 2013

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

To Whom It May Concern:

It has come to my attention that the FCC is proposing language that requires schools and libraries that use interactive communication features such as blogging and/or email to purchase them through a website hosting vendor. This revision will increase cost for districts that create and maintain their own website internally, reduce the flexibility of choosing the best vendor with the best product (i.e., feature), and decrease the number of viable vendors thereby diminishing competition.

Fort Wayne Community Schools (FWCS) due to complexity and district size maintains their own website in-house; therefore, FWCS does not need the services of a vendor to host their website but we do need web services like email. To require features like email and blogging to be provided ONLY by vendors offering web hosting services would require more expense and reduce our flexibility with our own site. FWCS needs to purchase ONLY email and blogging services as a part of their webhosting efforts.

If webhosting is defined to require all web-based services, the flexibility of using an email product from one vendor, the blogging services from another, and the website hosting services from still another will be eliminated. This would create a situation where we would need to forgo choosing the best email vendor, the best blogging vendor, etc. This is a disservice to schools and libraries and would cause inferior products in some areas to be selected based on a whole service approach. Allowing the components to be individually selected will allow us to select the best product for the need.

It has always been the goal of the e-Rate process to promote competition and reduce the cost of services for schools and libraries. This direction goes against those objectives.

I would be happy to discuss this further with you if you desire.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jack R. Byrd', is written over a white background.

Jack R. Byrd
Director of Technology

Technology

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