



VINTON MUNICIPAL COMMUNICATIONS UTILITY

Connect to Learn Program Executive Summary

Abstract

Vinton Municipal Communications Utility proposes a program utilizing CARES Act funding via the State Broadband Grant program to help ensure that all K-12 students in Vinton, Iowa have connectivity for distance learning during the 2020-21 school year.

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Summary

Vinton Municipal Communications Utility (“VMCU”) is applying for CARES Act funding under the State Broadband Grant program (NOFA #003) to fully fund its **Connect to Learn** program. Connect to Learn is designed to ensure that every K-12 student living in Vinton, Iowa have access to a connection for what is likely to be at least some home-based education.

VMCU, working in conjunction with the Vinton-Shellsburg Community School District (VSCSD), will identify students whose households qualify for reduced or free school lunch. Eligible households that did not have connectivity as of the issuance date of NOFA #003 would receive a \$500 service credit toward broadband internet connectivity.

Eligible households would have the choice between applying the \$500 credit toward either of the following options.

- 1) A virtual local area network (VLAN) connection between the home and the district’s network. This VLAN connection would be paid for in its entirety for the duration of the 2020-21 school year.
- 2) A credit on the household’s VMCU account that would be applied toward the cost of VMCU’s Home100 internet service. The normal price for this service is \$70 per month, so the credit would cover the entire cost of this level of service for seven months with a remainder credit of \$10 toward their bill in month 8. For the remaining months of the school year the household would pay the normal price for service.

With either option installation charges to the household would be waived.

Eligibility Process

For the purposes of this application, the VSCSD has provided VMCU with an estimated number of households in the Vinton city limits that qualified for free or reduced school lunch during the 2019-2020 school year. When the district begins the registration process for the 2020-21 school year, it will further define eligibility moving forward.

After school registration, the district will mail a Connect to Learn enrollment packet to eligible households. The household will be asked to identify which service option (VLAN or full internet) they choose to adopt. There are two important qualifications under the NOFA that need to be determined for each enrollment application; that the household meets the definition of a non-adopter and that they are not already receiving a monthly subsidy under the Lifeline program. The enrollment packet will have a form on which the household can attest to their eligibility under these criteria.

Upon completion and return of the enrollment materials, VMCU will determine eligibility and, if qualified, schedule a service installation and apply the \$500 credit toward the household’s account.

Deployment

VMCU will prioritize service installations under the Connect to Learn program to ensure that all eligible households are connected as early as possible in the school year.