

# Technology Readiness Infrastructure Grant (TRIG)

Frequently Asked Questions  
Last Updated: December 11, 2012

TRIG: [http://www.techplan.org/downloads/pdfs/final\\_tri\\_grant\\_rfp\\_20121115\\_150121\\_8.pdf](http://www.techplan.org/downloads/pdfs/final_tri_grant_rfp_20121115_150121_8.pdf)

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Note: Where feasible, questions have been grouped based on Categories and Activities within the grant. The last section of the document is general questions related to the grant as a whole. Page numbers were inserted where applicable to the question.

## PURPOSE OF THE GRANT [Page 2]

- 1) **(November 20, 2012) What is the definition of “Network Services” and what would it include?** Initially, Network Services would include the components needed to facilitate a Statewide Educational Network (SEN) i.e. the circuits, interconnects, network administration, support, etc., access to the data centers housing the instructional and assessment applications, and based on economics such services as Internet, video, VoIP, etc.

## PROGRAM DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS [Page 3]

- 1) **(November 20, 2012) What does the statement, “in no way should this be construed as physically ‘building a statewide network’ mean?** It is not the intent of the grant to build a statewide fiber backbone to create a SEN, but rather to provide for the interconnecting of existing ISD WANs. Where it makes sense financially it provides for the possibility of “building out” portions of the network to provide such interconnectivity as needed for the SEN (see Category Five: Interconnecting ISD and District Proposals).
- 2) **(November 20, 2012) Page 2 in RFP “MDTMB is in the process of establishing a SMC for network services” what outreach will there be to existing vendors state-wide who may not be aware of the SMC process? I know our local vendors are intimately aware of the federal USF vendor participation and SPIN requirements; will any of that federal data be used to help identify and communicate with ALL potential vendors in the State?** The MDE will endeavor to inform all districts and ISDs when the SMC Request for Proposal is released from DTMB.

## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS [Page 5]

- 1) **(November 20, 2012) How can an ISD acting on behalf of constituent districts and not acting as a consortium lead, meet the “eligibility requirement” to demonstrate cost savings?** ISDs will be able to demonstrate cost savings by assisting their constituent districts to meet some of the nine Category One requirements (Page 7 -8). A few examples of ways to demonstrate cost savings could be:
  - i) Assisting constituent districts to connect indirectly to a SEN via their existing WAN as opposed to constituent districts having to connect directly.

ii) Assisting constituent districts in various aspects of the technology readiness assessment, planning and pilot processes.

iii) Assisting constituent districts in the E-rate application process

- 2) **(November 20, 2012) Does the requirement to demonstrate “cost savings” exclude activities that do not save money, but create efficiencies and free up resources (i.e. personnel time)?** No, it does not exclude such an approach. However, because ISD applicants are required by the legislation to demonstrate “savings”, they must show how such efficiencies and freed up resources could be measured in terms of “savings”.
- 3) **(November 20, 2012) Is this for all five categories?** Yes, state board eligibility requirements apply to all five categories.
- 4) **(November 20, 2012) “A consortium must be comprised of a partnership of districts and ISDs with at least 4 ISDs, and at least 50 districts.” Is the ISD considered a district or must this be 4 ISD(s) consisting of a total of 50 or more individual districts, not including the ISD(s) themselves as a district ?** The ISD may count any “districts” it operates and has students enrolled, providing that they each met the eligibility requirements and filed successfully for Category One.

## CATEGORY ONE

### General Category One questions:

- 1) **(November 20, 2012) You have indicated that we could agree to the nine items now then simply back out and refund the money to the state if one of the less defined items became a roadblock for us. How would that impact the local districts if the ISD were the one to not agree to something after the fact?** We have updated the RFP to provide districts and ISDs with the follow clarifications:
- a. Category One funds should be viewed as an investment on behalf of the State in the efforts of participating districts to become technologically ready for online assessments and Any Time, Any place, Any Way, Any Pace learning. At any point during the grant program (January 2013- June 2014), Participating districts may decide, for whatever reason, not to meet any one of the requirements and notify the MDE. The MDE will work with districts opting-out of Category One to return the grant funds.
  - b. Requirement #9- If an ISD declines to participate in Category One, its constituent districts will not receive Category one funding. If at any time an ISD declines to participate, its constituent districts may be required to return the Category One funds they have received.
- 2) **(November 20, 2012) For Category One, is the funding automatic with all accepted applications? If no, what is the rubric for Category One?** Funding is automatic if the district is 1) Eligible (i.e., completed the SBAC survey) and 2) Submitted an application in MEGS+ by December 20, 2012. The application in MEGS+ is simply the agreement to the nine participation requirements.

- 3) **(November 20, 2012) Are there guidelines, clarifications, or a definition of what is involved in “completing the technology readiness planning process”?** No, not at this time. Districts are required to complete the SBAC survey in order to participate in the Category One grants. As a part of the Technology Readiness process there could be more than one tech readiness data collection each year using the Technology Assessment Planning Tool (Category Three, Activity Two). Consortium leads will be responsible to oversee the planning and execution of these tech readiness data collections and the associated pilots within their consortium.
- 4) **(November 20, 2012) Are the consortia established in Category 2 expected to participate together in the same network services outlined as one of the requirements for Category 1 Item 2? In other words, will all districts in a 4+ ISD, 50+ LEA consortia need to have the same ISP for internet bandwidth?** No. A SMC for Internet services would provide for geographically based providers of these services and could in fact be different even in a specific geographical location based on bandwidth requirements, circuit delivery, etc.
- 5) **(November 20, 2012) Are the consortia established in Category 2 expected to participate together in the same Category 3 Activities (i.e. the entire consortium participates in the same Category 3 Activity)?** Most of the Activities contained in Category Three are pilots. They call for statewide participation of selected entities based on specific criteria i.e. size, location, etc. in order to have a successful pilot. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that for most Category Three Activities all consortia leads will work with the winning Activity consortium to select certain districts within their consortium to participate in the pilot.
- 6) **(November 20, 2012) We have our own consortium with local school districts and this would propose a new consortium.** This is likely if your current consortium is your current consortium does not meet Category Two consortium eligibility requirements and/or your consortium does not score well against the Category Two rubric.
- 7) **(November 27, 2012) Does each ISD individually also need a Category One application in MEGS+?** Yes, ISDs must complete a Category One application for both the ISD and any ISD schools that it operates. In the event that only ISDs are listed in MEGS+ once, any submitted Category One application will count for both the ISD and ISD school(s).
- 8) **(November 27, 2012) Does every district individually need a Category One application in MEGS+?** Yes.
- 9) **(November 27, 2012) For Category One, is the funding automatic with all accepted applications? If not, what is the rubric for Category One?** Yes, it is automatic. The MDE will match the SBAC survey completion list, the completed applications in MEGS+ from both districts and ISDs to derive a final Category One participate list that will be used to award Category One funds to be paid out in the January 2013 SAMS allowance.
- 10) **(November 27, 2012) In Category One districts would be awarded funds for agreeing to the nine requirements, how do they do this if only one or two districts in the county would use Category One funds on wireless connectivity?** There are no penalties for districts that spend their funds within Category One spending

guidelines (requirement #8). These apply only to district level Category one awards. Because the awards are made directly to districts, the cost savings requirements do not apply. The MDE does encourage, however, ISDs to organize their districts to leverage state investment under Category One wherever possible.

- 11) **(November 29, 2012) Is \$10/student firm or can that be interpreted as "up to \$10 per student"?** \$10 will be awarded in Category One based on the district's fall 2012 blended count.
- 12) **(November 29, 2012) As a district am I only required to agree to the Category One requirements then return to MEGS+ in Category Four?** Yes
- 13) **(November 29, 2012) Can Category One funds be used to update our network and switches or pay for wireless in building?** Yes to both
- 14) **(November 29, 2012) Will we need to spend Category One funds through our consortium leader?** No. Category One funds are awarded and spent by the district.
- 15) **(November 29, 2012) How will districts know if they have completed Category One requirements?** After November 29<sup>th</sup>, check the final SBAC completion list that will be posted to techplan.org. Between November 22 and December 20, log on to MEGS+ and complete the Category One application. Once you receive confirmation of your applications submission and check to ensure that you are on the completion list, you have fulfilled the Category One application requirements.
- 16) **(November 29, 2012) We can't spend the [Category One] funds anyway we want, correct?** No, district spending has to adhere to the Category One requirements guidelines.
- 17) **(November 29, 2012) Is my ISD required to comply with Category One for my district to receive funds?** Yes, ISDs must agree to Category One requirements for their districts to receive funds.
- 18) **(November 29, 2012) Are districts required to apply for Category One if they are part of the ISD consortium application?** Yes, each district has to complete the Category One application to receive Category One funds. Also, to be eligible to apply for Category Two funds, ISDs must have submitted a Category One application.
- 19) **(November 29, 2012) If the local ISD does not participate what happens to their districts that applied?** We anticipate all ISDs participating; if your ISD does not apply for Category One you cannot receive Category One funds.
- 20) **(November 29, 2012) Can you explain the benefits of the SEN and how it relates to the SBAC?** As the national and state assessments move online, more and more assessment, instructional, and general education traffic will be generated resulting in significantly increased bandwidth requirements for every district. Today that access or "interconnectivity" is provided primarily through the commodity "Internet," which increases in cost with usage. However, much if not most of the traffic will be more accurately classified as "Intranet" traffic between the various educational entities within Michigan. It is envisioned that more and more data and services will need to be housed at various ISDs and data centers and made accessible statewide to all districts. A SEN will

connect existing ISD WANs together along with the state educational agency to provide shared educational resources statewide. This is one reason it is essential that ISDs participate as in most cases they are the mechanism by which their districts currently access the Internet i.e. external services.

- 21) **(November 29, 2012) Will the SEN support only internet or data traffic also?** The SEN will be an intranet which will provide both Internet and data traffic.
- 22) **(November 29, 2012) Will ISDs need to file a Category One application in MEGS+ if they also have?** Yes, all ISDs will need to file a Category One application in MEGS+ for their ISD and also for each ISD school that has a district code and enrolled students for which they want to receive Category One funds.
- 23) **(November 28, 2012) Does each district have to confirm in MEGS+ or can an ISD complete the application on their behalf?** Each district and their constitute ISD has to apply individually in MEGS+.
- 24) **(November 28, 2012) For the nine requirements, if we cannot commit to them, then what?** The nine requirements are only if they apply to you. We have provided flexibility to that at any time the district determines it cannot fulfill the requirements they will return the funds.
- 25) **(November 28, 2012) What if a district hasn't completed the survey by Thursday?** We have wiggle room with the term "substantially complete" but if they haven't even started the survey we don't have and room for adapting.
- 26) **(November 28, 2012) If the idea is to access this through an Intranet, doesn't that require 100% participation?** Ideally, yes, the objective is to connect 100% of the ISDs and districts to the SEN. For many this will be accomplished through existing and updated ISD WANs.
- 27) **(November 28, 2012) Concern about buying into the SMC, what can we expect for the quality of the contract? We are constantly improving for our districts, if we are part of the SMC how can we ensure improvement?** The SMC is just that, a State Master Contract offering numerous services from which ISDs and districts can pick and choose to meet their specific needs. These needs and opportunities will vary by geographical region, size of student populations, etc. Long term the SMC should serve as a vehicle to bring all districts' access to services up to a high level of technology readiness.
- 28) **(November 28, 2012) Network services; many ISDs provide Internet services to districts and improve districts services based on need. I am worried that when I read the language that I am handing over my service providing to someone who won a statewide bid, am I correct?** Not really. What this process does is apply the combined expertise of all of these ISDs and districts, through the consortium model, to bid for the exact services that we will need in each region. Further, the actual review and selection of services through a SMC would be done by the consortium leads. Last, once these services and ultimately equipment are made available through a SMC, it is the responsibility of the consortium and their districts to evaluate these services in the context of state, local and E-rate bidding practices. The result should be a more thorough and less complicated process both at the ISD and local district level.

- 29) **(November 28, 2012) Are network services going to be outsourced, example: Compuware.** Yes and no. More often than not the outsourcing will be to specific ISD consortiums and/or to those they have contracted with. The goal of the grant is that Category Two, consortium leaders will provide overall governance.
- 30) **(November 28, 2012) Not all the districts that we spoke to have completed the SBAC survey, will that affect our Category Two Consortium Leadership eligibility if they don't complete the survey and we cannot therefore, meet the requirements given?** The rubric for Category Two has changed and it has become easier to meet. Do understand that this is the competitive portion of the grant.
- 31) **(November 28, 2012) Why would the ISD need to submit multi Category One applications?** You have to submit as an ISD for your constitute districts to receive Category One money and multiple ISDs operate PSAs under them.
- 32) **(November 28, 2012) Why would a SEN be essential?** The MDE will be providing additional information.
- 33) **(December 5, 2012) If an ISD has a Wide Area Network (WAN) that provides safe, secure, reliable, and redundant connections to the State Educational Network (SEN) for schools district in the ISD network, for that ISD and its connected school districts, can the following requirements be waived?** No, the requirements cannot be waived beyond those that have been provided in the updated RFP, but the existence of these abilities may partially or completely fulfill the requirements. Once the consortiums have been formed, the MDE will work with the consortia leadership to best determine the approach to take in each and every case using E-rate purchasing guidelines as a rule.

## REQUIREMENT 1

- 1) **(November 20, 2012) Are districts being asked to agree to participate in one statewide or regional consortium, before those consortia have been defined?** No, in fact the decision about which consortium a district will actually participate in does not occur until Category Four, at which time all consortiums will have been clearly defined.
- 2) **(November 20, 2012) Will districts be able to opt out if the consortium they selected is unaffordable, or an unreasonable value proposition for the district (i.e. higher cost/lower service)?** No, however to assist in preventing such a situation from occurring, districts are encouraged to actively participate in the decision processes of their consortium and to keep up to date on all the activities of their consortium.
- 3) **(November 20, 2012) What if a district simply cannot participate due to their circumstances?** There is no provision in the grant for a district to be awarded grant funds or to retain grant funds without participation in one of the selected consortia. If the district decides in Category Four that no consortium is suitable, they can withdraw from the grant and return the grant funds received in Category One.
- 4) **(November 20, 2012) Because we have a lot of unknowns with the Category One, nine requirements, how can we agree without knowing all the information?** Section 22.i funds are an investment in district technology readiness. The MDE is issuing

funds in advance of required activities to provide funding for districts to meet the requirements. Should at any point a district determine that it is not capable of meeting those requirements; they notify the MDE and return the funds.

- 5) **(November 20, 2012) Can others outside of Category One participants purchase the identified devices to drive down the prices?** Yes, non-participating districts and/or non-public schools can participate in the aggregated device purchasing program, but they are not eligible to receive any rebate, discount, or incentive derived directly from the grant funds.
- 6) **(November 20, 2012) Are ISDs schools eligible to participate?**
  - o Yes, you need to file as a district and ISD.
  - o The MDE is updating the Fall 2012 Estimated Blended Count spreadsheet to reflect ISD schools. The MDE will post the updated spreadsheet to [techready.org](http://techready.org).
- 7) **(November 20, 2012) Agree to participate in one of the Category Two consortiums that do not exist yet.** Addressed in the revised RFP v2 coming out on December 6, 2012.

## REQUIREMENT 2

- 1) **(November 20, 2012) Is the desire to have a single, statewide vendor for all network services?** No, it does not appear to be conceivable that any one vendor or even a small number of vendors could actually provide the necessary statewide network services or circuits needed for a SEN.
- 2) **(November 20, 2012) Will districts be able to opt out if the value proposition is detrimental to the district (i.e. higher cost/lower service)?** The purpose of a State Master Contract (SMC) is to aggregate volume and reduce the overall cost of a specific network service, e.g. Internet access, filtering, etc. The purpose and approach to such contracts should ensure that the level of services needed, purchased through a SMC, would cost less than would otherwise be available to districts.
- 3) **(November 20, 2012) Timing for State Master Contract, who do we contact for obtaining a waiver to extend an internet services contract for the end of the school year?** All requests for permission to extend or enter in to a new contract should be made in writing to Bruce Umpstead via email ([umpsteadb@michigan.gov](mailto:umpsteadb@michigan.gov)). Please include "E-rate contract extension waiver request" in the subject heading. More information on what the request should contain will be provided in December 2012.
- 4) **(November 20, 2012) How can we agree to participate before we know the costs and services as well as the definition of what is included?** Section 22.i funds are an investment by the State in district technology readiness. MDE is issuing funds through the State Aid Management System (SAMS) to provide funding in advance of required activities. Should any of the required activities prove adverse to a given district or ISD, the district or ISD can inform MDE and return the funds provided to accomplish the activity. In the case of an ISD not meeting a requirement, the constituent district funding may be impacted.
- 5) **(November 27, 2012) What if the only option on the SMC is not an acceptable solution for a districts area? For example, what if the only vendors that respond for**

**our area have a record of not providing acceptable services, or what if they are significantly more expensive than another option not available on the SMC?** The MDE will not force applicants to buy off contracts that are adverse to districts. It is anticipated that the SMC will make certain services more affordable than current contracts. The MDE has provided additional flexibility in the clarification made within the RFP dated 11/29/12, the following is the added clarification:

- a) The MDE intends to form a statewide consortium for the purpose of purchasing network services on behalf of all participating districts and ISDs through establishing a state master contract (MSC). The MDE understands there is a great deal of ambiguity in this requirement because the SMC is in development. To alleviate the challenges caused by this, the MDE will provide a standard waiver that will give participating districts until June 30, 2015 to begin buying off the SMC.
- 6) **(November 27, 2012) For those of us that run large fiber optic networks, is the requirement to connect to the SEN network for each district, for each ISD, or for each consortium?** The objective of Category Five is to interconnect districts and ISDs. If connecting to a Wide Area Network (WAN) provides safe, secure, reliable, and redundant connections to the State Education Network (SEN) for every school district, in the network, then connecting to the network is required.
- 7) **(November 27, 2012) Page 2: "MDTMB is in the process of establishing a SMC for network services" What outreach will there be to existing vendors state-wide who may not be aware of the SMC process? I know our local vendors are intimately aware of the federal USF vendor participation and SPIN requirements; will any of that federal data be used to help identify and communicate with all potential vendors in the state?** MTMB will endeavor to inform every potential vendor about the resulting RFP for network services. The MDE will endeavor to inform all participating districts and ISDs when the MTMB network services RFP is released. The MDE will use a number of means of notification including the Tech-C and E-rate list serves.
- 8) **(December 3, 2012) How will existing ISD consortiums be impacted by creating a SEN?** It is anticipated that these existing ISD consortiums will become part of the SEN. That is part of the Category Two consortium forming process. It may have an even broader impact on provided reduced cost and greater service levels statewide. It is the MDE's hope that experienced leadership will result in assisting all districts to obtain the necessary services and support to become tech-ready through these consortiums utilizing the SEN.

### REQUIREMENT 3

- 1) **(November 20, 2012) What if the agreement contradicts existing consortium network agreements?** It would be reasonable to expect that there will be operational changes required as a result of the TRIGs.
- 2) **(November 27, 2012) During a call it was mentioned that we would have to allow state traffic to traverse our networks. Is there a limit to how much traffic could come across? If it becomes a burden on our network, how would the cost of upgrades be covered?** We have amended the RFP to include the following clarification about the shared services agreement:

- a) The term 'shared services agreement' refers generically to an agreement between the state and district/ISD to allow the State of Michigan to utilize district/ISD networks for interconnecting state agencies. The MDE realizes this may impact district/ISD e-rate filings. The MDE will only request participating districts and ISDs to sign such agreements at the request of the Michigan Department of Technology, Management and Budget (DTMB). No blanket agreement is required at this time.
  - i) Should the state require a shared services agreement, the details of the agreement will be worked out pursuant to each agreement made between DTMB and the specific district/ISD.

3) **(November 27, 2012) What cost would be associated with this agreement? If this a VPN connection to allow a connection network-wide to a private state network?**

This could include but it not limited to a VPN connection. A VPN connection is required at this point.

4) **(November 20, 2012) Agree to sign a shared services contract with the Michigan Department of Technology Management and Budget (MDTMB) for unknown services and allow for a connection to the Statewide Education Network, which is of completely unknown quality, reliability, costs, etc. because it doesn't exist yet.**

Addressed in the revised RFP v2 coming out on December 6, 2012.

5) **(December 3, 2012) We are setting up a fiber connection between all our schools; will we be able to do this off the SMC?**

We anticipate that between the Category Three Activities, which include the creation of SMCs and Category Five there will be support and assistance for such efforts.

#### REQUIREMENT 4

- 1) **(November 20, 2012) What if the district does not have capacity to participate (i.e. is not tech ready) in the pilot opportunities?** The district will not be selected if it does not have capacity within reason. It should be noted that not having enough time or not wanting to participate is not the same thing as not having enough capacity.
- 2) **(November 27, 2012) When is the pilot opt in due by? Is it too late for current year? What about districts that do not have adequate technology or internet bandwidth to support this?** This is to be decided by the Bureau of Assessment and Accountability, MDE.
- 3) **(November 20, 2012) Agree to participate in an unknown number of pilots requiring an unknown amount of work.** Addressed in the revised RFP v2 coming out on December 6, 2012.

#### REQUIREMENT 5

- 1) **(November 20, 2012) Agree to install ANY hardware/software provided... which hasn't been selected and results in an unknown amount of work, impact, or compatibility. Also, must agree to participate in a new technology readiness process that is undefined and that will require unknown resources.** Addressed in the revised RFP v2 coming out on December 6, 2012.

- 2) **(November 20, 2012) Installing hardware and software and “zero effort” appear to be contradictory. What exactly is meant by this?** MDE hopes to obtain a tech readiness assessment process that is zero-effort on an ongoing basis, by implementing software or devices that regularly measure the key parameters within the environment and report those back to a central database. Thus the term zero-effort. However, as implied the initial installation of this software or device will require districts to assist in the implementation of this process. We anticipate the cost of installation to be covered by the grant.
- 3) **(November 20, 2012) Who will provide support if the installation requires network configuration and/or there are problems with the data collection, or problems caused by the data collection?** This is the work of the Category Three Activity Two awardee and any funding required would be part of Category Five.
- 4) **(November 27, 2012) “The MDE intends to deploy the technology readiness planning process for all participating districts in 2013-14, should additional funding be provided.” This statement seems to be saying that the technology readiness planning process to replace the SBAC survey is still up in the air and not a part of this process. PD seems to have the same disclosure in the next paragraph of waiting on addition funding, please clarify.** MAISA, through the RDI grant, has started the process of defining technology readiness planning that meets “best practices” requirements for both districts and ISDs. The MDE anticipated opening that process to every school district and ISD if funds are available. In 2012-13, this grant will facilitate 100 districts completing that process as a “pilot,” before scaling to the entire state.
- 5) **(November 27, 2012)What elements will be reported from the proposed “monitoring and reporting technology readiness at the district and/or school building level” and what kind of privacy concerns should districts have?** To be determined by the technology readiness planning process under Category Three, Activity Two. The MDE does not anticipate violating a district’s privacy or the acceptable use policy.
- 6) **(December 3, 2012) What monitoring do you see happening at the district and higher level?** We anticipate that this will be defined during Category Three Activity Two and Category Five. We view monitoring as a normal network management processes to assist with tech-ready assessments and ultimately to ensure adequate performance and reliability of a SEN.

## REQUIREMENT 6

- 1) **(November 20, 2012) What is the definition of “all its eligible Priority 1 services”?** For funding year 2013 (school year 2013-14) it would mean a minimum of all applicable Priority 1 services for which the district is eligible to apply, with the oversight and assistance of their consortium lead. For funding year 2014 (school year 2014-15), it is anticipated that guidance will be provided to all Category Two consortiums by the Category Three Activity One awardee as to what should be evaluated by each consortium to ensure that districts are receiving their maximum E-rate benefits
- 2) **(November 20, 2012) If a consortium already applies on behalf of the district for the district’s eligible Priority 1 services, does this cover this requirement?** Yes, assuming that in fact it will continue to do so.

- 3) **(November 27, 2012) If an ISD is acting as an ISP for the locals they can no longer apply for internet because they would serve as a vendor. Would ISDs get an expectation from the requirement to apply for E-rate in that area?** The following is the clarification provided in the RFP from the MDE:
- a) In the 2013-14 school year, participating districts and ISDs are required to file for e-rate under district or ISD filing protocol. The MDE intends to structure a statewide e-rate filing for 2014-15 through Category Three, Activity One. Participating districts and ISDs that purchase off the SMC would be expected to participate in the statewide e-rate filing for 2014-15.
- 4) **(November 20, 2012) The \$10 per student funds are limited to purchases off a State Master Contract or the "purchasing pilot", neither of which exists yet and would not allow for better/more suitable solutions.** Addressed in the revised RFP v2 coming out on December 6, 2012.
- 5) **(November 20, 2012) Agree to apply for e-rate discounts, but must still must purchase off the State Master Contract (Item 8). Would the SMC be in place in time for closure of the 471 window?** Addressed in the revised RFP v2 coming out on December 6, 2012.

#### **REQUIREMENT 7**

- 1) **(November 20, 2012) Essentially requires a district to publicly endorse a vendor(s) regardless of the quality of the vendors.** Notifying families of their options is not an endorsement per se. The MDE will provide districts with a qualified list of programs and a sample communication for informing parents.

#### **REQUIREMENT 8**

- 1) **(November 27, 2012) Can these funds in either Category One or Five be used specifically for in-building hard-wire network upgrades along with necessary LAN and WAN component upgrades?** The district has full discretion on how to spend the funds if they stay within the guidelines listed in the RFP:
- a. Network services off SMB
  - b. Computer/device purchasing pilot
  - c. In building wireless connectivity
  - d. Technology readiness planning
  - e. Online/digital assessment.
- 2) **(November 27, 2012) Please explain what "online/digital assessment" covers.** Under Category One, districts must agree to spend grant funds on one or more of the five activities that help prepare districts to deliver online assessments in the 2014-15 school year. The district agrees to limit Category One spending to the following uses and agrees to submit a budget under Category Four explain how funds were/should be spent:
- a. Network services off SMC
  - b. Computer/device purchasing pilot
  - c. In-building wireless connectivity
  - d. Technology Readiness Planning
  - e. Online/digital assessment

- i. This category is fairly broad and the MDE doesn't have a specific activity in mind. Districts may use the funds to purchase digital or online assessment content and services. Districts may also use the funds for audience response system to collect and transmit assessments digitally. Districts may use the funds to purchase license, hardware, etc. for instructional data systems that are used to deliver local or regional online assessments.
  - ii. It should be noted that the MDE will not ask for budgets from districts for Category One spending but in Category Four, the MDE will ask for a percentage breakdown of spending across the five approved spending areas.
- 3) **(November 20, 2012) Referring to the submission of a budget to the state in Category Four, do funds need to be spent by February 11th as this section states in Process to Apply: Category Four, 1, B?** No, they don't need to be spent by February 11, 2013, they can be estimates. The MDE will be obtaining the applicants anticipated expenditures as percentages of the five categories. The spend-by date is June 30, 2014.

### Category Two, Process to Apply [Page 9]

- 1) **(November 27, 2012) If we apply for the grant as a consortium and already have a network, how can we adapt our network [to meet the requirements of the grant]?** It makes sense to build Category Two consortiums out of pre-existing relationships, such as the network consortium the question refers to. The goal of the Category consortia is to help the participating districts in becoming tech ready and to assist the state accomplish the statewide goals of the grant. The goal of Category Five is to interconnect pre-existing districts and school networks and the Category Two consortia will assist the state in determining the best means of interconnecting.
- 2) **(November 20, 2012) Item 3 indicates the application must include a list of districts and ISDs participating in the consortium. Is it possible for additional districts to join in Category 4, or is participation limited to those who are cited in Attachment 2?** Yes. The list is considered preliminary and may result in additions or deletions based on the outcome of the selection of Category Two consortia. Consortiums that are not selected during Category Two will be encouraged to join with a consortium that is selected. This process will require various discussions with losing consortium members and the winning consortia leads.
- 3) **(November 20, 2012) Is there a chance we can move the Category Two application deadline?** The MDE is considering extending the deadline for Category Two applications. The deadline has been changed to January 31<sup>st</sup> for Category Two applications.
- 4) **(November 20, 2012) "Includes a documented partnership with at least one statewide education leadership association" please provide a list of these "leadership associations" and can you define what does the organization need to do to be consider eligible?** The MDE chose not to list specific "leadership associations" in an effort not to limit consideration. At a minimum these would include statewide educational conference associations and statewide certification associations.
- 5) **(November 20, 2012) Does "Contiguous ISD's" refer simply to geographic proximity?** Yes

- 6) **(November 20, 2012) Is it permissible for a consortium to arise around a "strategy" [such as NWEA testing by consortium members to promote movement (in hardware, access, and PD) toward readiness for SBAC assessment (and along the way, implementation of the CCSS)] and that the consortium might still accomplish the other goals of the project? Or, will consortia have to be geographically regionalized, regardless of how close or far from readiness for SBAC individual districts may be?** Consortia can form for any number of secondary reasons. As long as they meet the eligibility and score well, they will be considered.
- 7) **(November 28, 2012) Do Category Two leaders have to monitor Category One spending?** No, the MDE will monitor that as part of Category Four when asking for percentage breakdown of spending from Category One funds.
- 8) **(November 28, 2012) To clarify, the consortium members will receive how much money?** Schools do not get extra money for joining a consortium, the consortium leaders receive extra money to carry out grant work and perform as fiscal agents.
- 9) **(November 28, 2012) Does this formula apply for a PSA consortium?** Yes, we are committed to getting PSA tech ready. We know that their completion rate of the SBAC survey is low currently, however because their staffing is small.
- 10) **(November 28, 2012) Does this give us leverage in negotiating terms for network services?** Yes, that is what the Category Two portion of the grant entails.
- 11) **(November 28, 2012) The reference to cost savings is ambiguous. How can we show cost savings without knowing many details about Category Two?** For your case [ISD] explain how it would make sense to give you funds rather than individual districts. Device purchasing and professional development are obvious cost savers at the ISD level rather than individual districts.
- 12) **(November 28, 2012) The Category Two spreadsheet that we must submit with application, does that lock those districts in [the ones that we propose]?** No, Category Four locks districts into their actual Category Two consortium.
- 13) **(November 28, 2012) Can districts or ISDS participate in multi consortiums based on Activities?** By definition most Activities will have statewide involvement incorporating ISDs and districts outside of the specific consortium being awarded an Activity. We want people to focus on technology readiness within each specific consortium. We encourage ISDs and districts to pick their consortium based on whom they would like to work with over multiple years of technology readiness initiatives, not based on a specific Activity. We view tech readiness as a multi-year grant process so you should base your decision on collaboration over multiple years, not just a specific Activity.
- 14) **(December 3, 2012) Is there a maximum size a consortium can be?** No, there is no limitation to the maximum size of a consortium, although the MDE is cautious about consortia becoming too large to be effective.

### CATEGORY THREE [Page 9-11]

- 1) **(November 20, 2012) Are consortia created in Category 2 required to apply for one of the seven Activities?** No. Category Two consortia are not required to apply for

any of the seven Category Activities, but they and some of the members of their consortium will be required to participate in most of the Category Three Activities.

- 2) **(November 27, 2012) Please define “external partners” for the purposed of this grant.** External partners may include state associations, vendors and other organizations that will strengthen the application because of their assistance in carrying out the grant work. For example, a great deal of the grant work requires professional project management services. It would be expected that for certain activities and perhaps certain Category Two consortiums, naming a professional project management organization as an external partner great improves an individual application.
- 3) **(November 20, 2012) In Category 3 Activities, please clarify the descriptions as they are similar but slightly different, see examples:**
  - a. **“...will accept proposals from winning consortium applicants under category 2...”**
  - b. **“...will accept proposals from proposed consortium leaders under category 2....”**

Effective RFP v2 all of these statements make participation in the Category Three Activities conditional on successfully winning a Category Two consortium application. Therefore, they must have proposed a Category Two consortium application.

## Activity One

- 1) **(November 20, 2012) Can you clarify or provide detail on “coordinating the interchange of all seven activities under this category”?** Although in Category Three a winner will be selected for each of the Activities, the winner of Activity One will be the overall project manager to coordinate the planning and execution of all seven Activities. It would be expected that they would have dedicated project managers, maintain and manage an overall project plan, conduct project status meetings with all the consortia, monitor budgets and maintain a close working relationship with MDE or its designee. In short, they along with MDE or its designee will oversee and manage the overall grant and all consortia activities. What may not be so clear is that the intent of this process to incorporate key personnel from each consortia as a statewide management team to coordinate and accomplish all seven of the Category Three Activities statewide. The grant Activities would be best viewed as the subprojects within the overall project to move towards a SEN maintained and managed by the consortia lead team. This grant provides a framework to bring the highly qualified expertise from all areas of technology and innovation throughout Michigan education together under a common framework to tackle these statewide objectives in a coordinated and consolidated approach. Key to the success of this effort will be the state agency and vendor partnerships that collectively the consortia bring to the process.
- 2) **(November 20, 2012) “These services relate to coordinating the interchange of all seven activities under this category, including the involvement of up to twelve Category Two consortia leaders and their participating districts. The applicant will also coordinate the formation of a statewide network services consortium” This statement seems to indicate that only 1 of the 12 winning Consortium leads will be taking the lead state-wide for all activities going forward?** They will take a leadership role in three areas: overall grant project

management and coordination of all grant categories and activities and the statewide E-rate consortium. However, each Activity awardee will have management responsibility for their Activity.

- 3) **(December 5, 2012) Is it the intent that the Category 3, Activity One winning consortium provide E-rate filing services to individual districts or just guidance on how to file for Priority 1 services covered by the SMC?** Both. Near term the intent is to oversee the establishment of SMCs related to E-rate Priority 1 services and as the SEN is implemented to establish a statewide E-rate consortium that files for Priority 1 services. In practice, the composition of a statewide E-rate consortium may be regional E-rate consortiums.
- 4) **(December 5, 2012) Can you give more information on using Category One funds for professional development?** Under Category One, Requirement 8, districts are allowed to expend funding on the professional development related to Technology Readiness Planning (Category Three, Activity Two) assuming they participate in this pilot Activity. Districts may spend funds on other professional development activities related to tech-readiness, but not on general professional development.
  - a. Example 1: PD on how to use recently purchases devices in online or digital assessment – YES
  - b. Example 2: PD on new curriculum changes – NO

### Activity Three

- 1) **(November 20, 2012) What role does the applicant fill vs. that of REMCAM in leading this activity?** The applicant will define the roles.
- 2) **(November 20, 2012) Does REMCAM already have a project plan, resources allocated to, and/or work done towards these activities?** N/A, MDE has not had extensive conversations with REMCAM since the grant funds were made available due to the competitive grant process.

### Activity Four

- 1) **(November 20, 2012) For responding to Category Three, Activity Four, please confirm that the estimated timeline to meet the requirements outlined in Attachment 6 rubric:** The following information is only the MDEs current understanding of how the process would run. The MDE hopes that the respondent would use its expertise to provide a more accurate process than the one articulated in the RFP for grant purposes. The following is therefore the MDEs best estimate:
  - March 2013 - The procurement program service, with identified devices, is in place.
  - April 2013 – District submit the number and type of devices information they will purchase along with locking in their commitment. (The MDE questions whether a district purchase order is needed at this step to establish a firm commitment.)
  - April-May 2013 - High volume device bids are released, analyzed and awarded.
  - June 2013 – Districts invoiced for committed purchases. Any rebates or incentives funded through the grant paid.

- July-August 2013- Payment received, devices delivered. Any ancillary services, such as device specific professional development included as part of the purchase package, also delivered.
  -
- 2) **(November 20, 2012) Volume-Based Purchasing Program... How is this different than REMC? Would there be a commitment from districts with the amount of devices and when would this be needed by for planning purposes?** It will be the responsibility of the Category Three Activity Four awardee to work with REMCAM to develop this plan. The MDE envisions such commitments being made by districts and a much greater responsibility for the entire procurement process to be managed statewide or regionally.
- 3) **(December 5, 2012) In planning the potential actions for this activity, we feel it would be beneficial to leverage existing state resources and processes. Could we use MEGS+ to create a secure way for districts to submit their intent to purchase (quantity and type of device)? How could that information then be extracted for use? Who would be the contact to work with on details? Using MEGS will allow us to filter who can submit information without creating a new system.** This is not an ideal use for MEGS+. We strongly encourage investigating collaborative purchasing software available through MSBO and others to accomplish the work of Activity Four.

#### Activity Five

- 1) **(November 20, 2012) What is involved in rapidly developing tech readiness for EEA schools?** As each school building is moved under the authority of the EAA a strategy and project plan needs to be developed to address technology readiness needs of the school. This includes all needed services and support resulting from being detached from the existing district to being attached to the EAA. It is anticipated that part of the activities of this award will result in a) evaluating the process(es) of previous school transfers, establishing a long term plan for new school transfers and actually managing the technology readiness efforts related to the new schools placed under the EAA in the coming year(s).

#### Activity Six

- 1) **(November 20, 2012) Have the school data and business systems been defined and prioritized, or is that up to the applicant to do?** What may not be apparent is that this Activity is really not about the migration of existing schools to a specific school data and business solution software system. Rather it is specifically focused on researching and piloting approaches to mirroring the data from existing systems in such a way that they can be transferred, migrated, updated into new systems with little to minimal conversion effort. Such approaches incorporate using nationally adopted schemas to map data from existing systems to a backend data store that is maintained and when needed used to populate new software systems with the district's existing data. It focuses on normalizing all of a districts data into a nationally defined schema consistent with what the state and federal standards are for student and school information.

#### Activity Seven

- 1) **(November 20, 2012) Are the high stakes assessments referenced existing assessments? If not are there examples?** For the purpose of the RFP high stakes is equivalent to the state collection of the data generated by the assessment (no examples).
- 2) **(November 20, 2012) What happens if the applicant is unable to attain the scope of any of the activities (i.e. Activity One, 56 ISDs, Activity Two, 100 districts)?** The selected consortium is required to demonstrate up front that they have the necessary resources, qualifications, experience and partnerships to accomplish the Activity in order to be selected for the award.

#### CATEGORY FOUR [Page 11]

- 1) **(November 20, 2012) Are the consortia referenced here the consortia created in Category Two or those created in Category Three?** Category Two
- 2) **(November 20, 2012) Do all districts participating in Category One need to participate in a Category Three Activity, or just consortia?** All districts are required to be in one Category Two consortia. Districts may be required to participate in the Category Three Activities, including an E-rate consortium formed out of Activity One.
- 3) **(November 20, 2012) Again, what is the definition of completing the technology readiness planning process?** Districts are required to complete the SBAC survey in order to participate in the Category One grants. As a part of the Technology Readiness process there will be multiple assessment times each year using the Technology Assessment Planning Tool (Category Three, Activity Two). Consortium leads will be responsible to oversee the planning and execution of these assessments and the associated pilots within their consortium.
- 4) **November 28, 2012) A local district (class c for example), they don't want to be a lead and need to be in a consortium. Why would they care which consortium they are a part of? May be able to benefit from PD and device purchasing proposed by the consortium. Category Five will affect them most because consortium leads are making decisions for them in the interconnecting of districts and ISDs.**

#### CATEGORY FIVE [Page 11]

- 1) **(November 20, 2012) Refers to a common 'Internet "backbone"': is the goal only to aggregate Internet services or to create a SEN?** The goal is to create a common "Intranet backbone". The term "Internet" here is a typo that we intend to correct in a future release of an updated RFP.
- 2) **(November 20, 2012) Will this include regional or statewide bids for Internet bandwidth?** To be clear, the goal is to have services such as Internet access and network circuits, bid at the state level and result in SMCs with districts purchasing from the SMCs. However, the actual vendors who will be awarded as a result of these bids for Internet access and circuits are anticipated to be regional service providers. MDE anticipates, based on the knowledge we have today, that SMCs will be awarded, for the foreseeable future, and to numerous regional providers from which consortiums will contract based on various factors.

- 3) **(November 20, 2012) Will this include recurring fees for interconnects?** Initially yes. However, in the coming years depending on the availability of funding it is conceivable that specific interconnects might be built out assuming it results in an overall economic advantage to do so.
- 4) **(November 20, 2012) Does this include building fiber where applicable?** Initially no, or in very limited situations. However, in the coming years depending on the availability of funding it is conceivable that specific interconnects might be built out assuming it results in an overall economic advantage to do so.
- 5) **(November 28, 2012) A lot of people here already have established consortiums for networks; Category Five might not be an incentive to join.** We hope that from Category One with \$10/student that will provide enough incentive to get started in the grant and the consortium leaders will assist the MDE with determining the best allocation of the Category Five and remaining funds.
- 6) **(November 20, 2012) Who will own the new interconnects?** To answer the question, it is necessary to identify several types of interconnects that the creation of the SEN will require:
- i) The primary interconnects will be peer connections between existing and future circuit providers to allow traffic to freely route across the state through the existing vendor circuits. In most cases these interconnects would be owned entirely by the vendors, but there may be exceptions where Indefeasible Right of Use (IRU) agreements for existing ISD fiber may be required.
  - ii) Secondary interconnects may need to be leased or built to connect key ISD WANs. In these cases the decision of ownership may come down to the E-rate-ability of the circuit. It may be best that a 3<sup>rd</sup> party vendor actually own and maintain such interconnects.
  - iii) Other interconnects will certainly be identified by various consortia as key to facilitating the SEN particularly in their region as there may not be an existing ISD WAN, etc.. Again, in these cases the decision to lease or build and the resulting ownership will come down to the E-rate-ability of the circuit(s).
- 7) **(November 20, 2012) Does this mean that Consortia and ISPs are going to 'become' the SEN?** To a certain degree yes, both existing and as needed future circuit providers and ISPs will become key to facilitating the SEN. Peer connections between these providers will be needed to allow traffic to freely route across the state through local and regional network service providers. As you may be aware last spring the MDTMB posted a Request for Information (RFI) for statewide network services. This was followed by an addendum that MDE requested this fall to request vendors to provide information as to how they would go about implementing a SEN. Overall there were two types of entities that responded: regional network services providers and large network integrators. For the most part they embrace an approach that would "integrate" existing ISD WANs and local and regional providers' circuits to form a SEN. MDE and the Category Three Activity One awardee would work with the Category Five awardee to issue an RFP to engage a statewide network integrator to analyze, design and implement a SEN. Realistically the integration and isolation of a SEN to dedicated circuits that are managed and monitored

statewide will take time and will be a series of staged implementations. However, there is much that can be done in the near term with what already exists today.

- 8) **(November 20, 2012) Who will be doing the SMC, and when will pricing be available?** By definition a SMC is a procurement process conducted by the State of Michigan, specifically the MDTMB. They are expecting to issue an RFP in January 2013 for numerous network services that will be available to all state agencies and educational entities. However, it is doubtful that such a comprehensive bid for K-12 services would be available for the upcoming E-rate window even though there are special provisions for converting to a SMC. The most likely transition point to a SMC would be the E-rate filing window for funding year 2014 (school year 2014-15).
- 9) **(November 20, 2012) How would existing ISPs become a vendor on the SMC, with differing cost structures and services offered/included?** This is actually quite common both within the state of Michigan and within numerous other states. What a SMC will provide is pricing for numerous services from numerous vendors statewide. There is not one winning vendor or one winning solution if you will. Vendors are requested to bid on any and all types of services that may be needed with each geographical region across the state. So for a given geographical area there could be multiple vendors with numerous service offerings with numerous options and differing cost structures.
- 10) **(November 20, 2012) How does USF timing fit into this, as some districts already have their 470 and RFPs out and due before there is a SMC and costs to choose from?** At this time, it is doubtful that such a comprehensive bid for K-12 services would be available for the upcoming E-rate window even though there are special provisions for converting to a SMC. The most likely transition point to a SMC would be the E-rate filing window for funding year 2014 (school year 2014-15). We are still considering the options and will make this information available within the next month.
- 11) **(November 20, 2012) How do schools go about using a SMC in the process filing their 470, contracting and filing their 471 forms?** The entire process to implement purchasing off of a SMC will require detailed briefings on using and converting to a SMC, how to utilize both a state 470 and/or a local ISD's/District's 470 in the bid evaluation process, entering into a contract based on a SMC and filing a 471 based on a SMC. At this time, it is doubtful that such a comprehensive bid for K-12 services would be available for the upcoming E-rate window or that the necessary training, etc. could occur in time. The most likely transition point to a SMC would be the E-rate filing window for funding year 2014 (school year 2014-15). We are still considering the options and will make this information available within the next month.
- 12) **(November 20, 2012) How can they commit to using the SMC without a competitive bid?** The FCC recognizes that states bid process as an acceptable competitive bid process. There are specific processes that each consortium will go through to utilize the state's bid process to purchase off of a SMC. In short, the process is known as a mini-bid, in which the applicant using the SMC bid responses does a bid evaluation for their specific needs and memorializes their bid decision using a bid matrix. Once the bid decision is made they move on to the contracting process using a state 470 and their own 471. Ideally, the contracting process will be predefined as a part of the SMC.

- 13) **(November 20, 2012) Are ISD ISPs going to be purchasing from the SMC, or each individual district?** It is unclear what is being asked. More detail please.
- 14) **(November 20, 2012) Will the network include other agencies (i.e. government, non-profit, etc.)?** No and yes. It is envisioned that the SEN will exist in a way that not only maintains, but actually increases its overall E-rate funding capability. However, the long term bid process should include other government agencies and result in both an increased purchasing capacity and overall reduced rates for both educational and non-educational entities.
- 15) **(November 20, 2012) Is this group responsible for E-rate on behalf of this initiative (coordinating the application, ensuring compliance, etc), or does this fall under Category Three Activity One?** Although Category Five has not been totally finalized, it is believed that E-rate will come under the oversight of the Category Three Activity One awardee and that the interconnects that need to be added to establish and where necessary build out the SEN will come under the oversight of the Category Five awardee.
- 16) **(November 20, 2012) What is the relationship between Category Three Activity One and Category Four and the applicants thereof?** The Activity One winner will be responsible for coordinating Category Two consortia work. Category Two winners will be responsible for the Category One participants that confirm their consortium selection/participation in Category Four.

## **GENERAL GRANT QUESTIONS**

1. **(November 20, 2012) Is staffing an allowable expense for the grant funds? In other words, can some of the grant funds be used to offset staffing costs for supporting grant activities?** Yes, but ONLY for direct costs incurred. State aid does not allow indirect costs.
2. **(November 20, 2012) What network services are expressly needed above and beyond services already available in an ISD Fiber network? What are the requirements of the following items to enable the SBAC online testing i.e. bandwidth, latency, reliability?** We are still waiting for SBAC to identify their requirements.
3. **(November 20, 2012) SEN: We have to agree to allow interconnections; we need a district level shared services agreement.** To clarify, districts will only have to sign a shared services agreement on request through their Category Two consortium. This means districts will only have to sign an agreement if requested.
4. **(November 20, 2012) We are concerned with the shared services agreement we are agreeing to, may we see a copy?** If a shared services agreement is necessary, we will provide it through the Category Two consortia. If at this point a district decides that it cannot sign the agreement, they may decline participation in the grant.
5. **(November 20, 2012) Is the shared services contract the same as the broadband agreement?** We believe so; Lapeer is the model for this, unfortunately, the Lapeer

contract has a non-disclosure clause so we cannot share it. We are working with DTMB to provide a generic sample agreement and will post to techplan.org when available.

6. **(November 20, 2012) What will happen if E-rate goes away? Who would assume the cost?** We don't see priority 1 going away at this time. At this time the general consensus is that it would have to be phased out over 3-5 years.
7. **(November 27, 2012) For those ISDs acting as an ISP to their locals:**
  - a. **Will we be able to continue being an ISP for our locals?**
  - b. **Would we then be able to offer internet to others outside our fiber network through the SEN?**
  - c. **Will those purchasing off the state contract bundling in some services and then reselling to the locals qualify the locals as buying off the state master contract?**
  - d. **If we are acting as an ISP for the locals we can no longer apply for E-rate for internet sense we would be a vendor. Would we get an exception from the requirements to apply for E-rate in that area?**
    - i. The MDE will work on a case by case basis to ensure services provided by ISDs are working for their constitute districts and may continue within certain constraints as the SMC is established.
- 9) **(November 27, 2012) This statement is through the document: "In order for an ISD to be eligible to apply, the applicant must demonstrate cost savings by providing grant award to the ISD compared to providing grant to individual districts." Does the cost savings criteria also apply to the one LEA and one PSA lead consortium which will be awarded? What time period does this cost savings need to be realized?** As the MDE reads the legislation, any costs savings must be realized within the time constraints of the funding which is October 1, 2012 through June 30, 2014.
- 10) **(November 27, 2012) "A second \$16 million of grant funds will be used by awardees to identify opportunities to connect missing portions of the state's ISDs, WANs and local district LANs." Neither this statement nor #8 on page 8 of the RFP seems to reference in-building network components other than wireless. Without a robust in-building infrastructure regardless of WAN or LAN, components in-building wireless will not be effective, can these funds in either Category One or Five be used specifically for in-building hard-wire network upgrades along with necessary LAN and WAN component upgrades?** The definition and scope of Category Five activities will be defined in partnership with the winning consortium selected in Category Two and confirmed in Category Four.
- 11) **(November 20, 2012) Reading from a district level and with my current understanding, I am seeing a minimal amount of opportunity for involvement of individual districts in this process. What do you see the role of a small school district being in the application process?** The minimum involvement would be Category One and Category Four, however, they will be the focus of many of the Activities and as a part of their consortium should have a part in directing Category Five funds based on their tech readiness assessment. There will potentially be other opportunities for districts to participate in pilot activities that will be led by Category Three winning consortiums.

- 12) **(November 20, 2012) I only understand an opportunity for us to apply and receive additional funds at a district level in Category 1 and Category 3, Activity 5. Otherwise, it appears that all of the grant funds are directed to consortium leaders. Is this an accurate statement?** As far as an initial award. However, through the various Category Three and Category Five they should be eligible for additional grant fund benefits related to these specific grant activities.
- 13) **(November 29, 2012) Does the district need to initiate the TRIG in MEGS+ or is that the ISDs responsibility?** Category One is the district responsibility. Funds go to the districts so they need to apply in MEGS+.
- 14) **(November 29, 2012) How will the notification of webinars be given?** You can view the calendar at [techplan.org](http://techplan.org) for dates and times and all webinar dates were given in the memos sent to building principals and superintendents.
- 15) **(November 29, 2012) Is the grant monitored by a field service representative?**  
No
- 16) **(November 29, 2012) If we are applying for Category Two later can we say that we are not leading a consortium so that we don't get an error message in MEGS+?** Applicants interested in applying for Category Two will have to first submit their application in MEGS+ by December 20, 2012 to meet the Category One guideline. At this time the application will be closed but will re-open for interested applicants on January 7, 2013. Interested applicants will have to contact the MDE to have their application re-opened, please contact Holli Crowley at: (517) 241-3629 or by email at [crowleyh@michigan.gov](mailto:crowleyh@michigan.gov).
- 17) **(November 28, 2012) Is there clarification anywhere in the RFP that would explain the use of data?** We don't have a data sharing agreement in the RFP, the only part that might affect that is Activity Six. If you have an issue with sharing data with the State of Michigan you shouldn't partake in Activity Six.
- 18) **(November 28, 2012) Can there be consideration given to adding language to the RFP for low bids or an alternative reason.** Please email to [techready@michigan.gov](mailto:techready@michigan.gov) with specific questions. We already have added flexibility.
- 19) **(November 28, 2012) If you don't participate in the TRIG, how does that negatively affect districts?** If a district chooses not participate in Category One they will miss out on receiving funding that could have assisted them in becoming technology ready for online assessments. If an ISD chooses not to participate in Category One they will cause their district's to miss out on receiving funding that could have assisted them in becoming technology ready for online assessments.
- 20) **(November 28, 2012) Will these powerpoints be posted?** Yes, on [techplan.org](http://techplan.org)
- 21) **(December 3, 2012) Can you state your overall goal for this grant in a simple sentence?** Invest in the collective tech-readiness of state at the ISD and district levels to deliver online assessments and any time, anyway, any place, any pace learning following the 54321 strategic framework.
- 22) **(December 3, 2012) Is the plan to create a model with participating districts and then move the non-participating to the collective model?** The ultimate plan is to assist

all districts in becoming tech-ready and a part of the SEN. Yes, several of the Category Three Activities are intended to pilot approaches with the participating districts that would then be applied statewide.

- 23) **(December 3, 2012) Can districts opt out of Category One participation and still participate in the other categories?** Districts cannot receive any funds from this grant if they do not participate in Category One. However, schools may participate by buying off of the SMC and may have the opportunity to benefit in various ways from the Category Three Activities so long as they do not receive direct financial assistance to do so.
- 24) **(December 3, 2012) There is a problem with the timeline, how can you address this?**
- a) At this point, we do not intend to change the Category One timeline. We have over 200 completed applications and it is hard coded in MEGS+.
  - b) The Category Two timeline has been extended to provide more time for people to work through the logistics of applying as a consortium lead.