

# PA Technology Plan Approval Process

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Beginning with E-rate Funding Year 2011, the FCC will no longer requires approved technology plans for Priority 1 requests (telecommunications services and Internet access services); however, the technology plan requirements remain for Priority 2 requests (internal connections and basic maintenance of internal connections).

## Public School Entity Technology Plan Approval

Public school LEAs must use the Comprehensive Planning Process (CPP) to create their educational technology plan reports for PDE review and approval. Similar to the Global Planning Process in the eStrategic Planner, the Comprehensive Planning Process assists LEAs in creating overarching, enterprise-wide goals and then identifying implementation strategies and action steps to effect the goals.

Unlike eStrategic Planning, Comprehensive Planning does NOT provide a separate educational technology plan report; therefore, all of an LEAs technology-related activities must be addressed in their Comprehensive Plan.

### Important Information for E-rate Recipients:

-- As of July 1, 2011, only entities applying for PRIORITY 2 E-rate funding are required to meet the federal technology planning requirements.

-- If you are a Phase 2 LEA, you should be in the process of creating a Comprehensive Plan to be submitted no later than November 30, 2013. (Please note: your Phase assignment may have changed as part of the transition from eStrategic Planning to Comprehensive Planning. See the attached Master Phase List Excel file to confirm your current Phase assignment (also available at: [http://www.education.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/lea\\_planners/8950/resources/535083](http://www.education.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/lea_planners/8950/resources/535083).)

-- Comprehensive Plans will be subjected to a review and approval process similar to prior eStrategic Plan Reports and, once approved, will span the subsequent three fiscal years in accordance with E-rate requirements. For example: Phase 2 Comprehensive Plans submitted by November 30, 2013, will be approved by June 30, 2014, and will be in effect July 1, 2014, through June 30, 2017.

-- If an LEA has a current Educational Technology Plan Report that will expire before a new Comprehensive Plan will be in effect, the LEA must submit a "gap" Educational Technology Plan Report using the old eStrategic Planner to span the lapse. For example: a Phase 1 LEA with a Plan Report expiring June 30, 2014, is reassigned to Phase 3 of the Comprehensive Planning Process. The new Comprehensive Plan will not be in effect until July 1, 2015; therefore, the LEA must create and submit NOW a Plan Report in the eStrategic Planner to span July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015.

The following steps are provided to assist LEAs with using the Comprehensive Planning Process to create an E-rate-compliant technology plan.

**E-RATE TECH PLAN REQUIREMENT 1:** The plan must establish clear goals and a realistic strategy for using telecommunications and information technology to improve education.

CROSSWALK TO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN WEB APPLICATION: There are two acceptable ways to address this requirement; either can be accomplished under District Level "View Action Plan". 1) Create at least one broad technology-related Goal supported by all of your technology-related Strategies, or 2) create overarching Goals promoting educational or organizational outcomes and then list each of your technology-related Strategies under the Goal(s) supported by its implementation. Whichever method you choose, you should include a minimum of two technology-related Strategies - and at least one Strategy should address professional development to ensure that staff understands how to use technology to improve education (see Requirement 2 below).

**E-RATE TECH PLAN REQUIREMENT 2:** The plan must have a professional development strategy to ensure that staff knows how to use these new technologies to improve education.

CROSSWALK TO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN WEB APPLICATION: At least one District Level Goal should have an associated professional development Strategy with a minimum of one Action Steps that specifically addresses professional development to ensure that staff understands how to use technology to improve education. (See Requirement 1 above regarding District Level "View Action Plan".)

**E-RATE TECH PLAN REQUIREMENT 3:** The plan must include an assessment of the telecommunication services, hardware, software, and other services that will be needed to improve education.

CROSSWALK TO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN WEB APPLICATION: The web application contains two separate Technology Services questions to assist you in addressing this requirement. LEA applying for Priority 2 services should be sure to include ALL of the E-rate-funded services (except basic phone service) -- both Priority 1 and Priority 2 -- that are or will be included on the District's E-rate application (or that are included on a consortium E-rate application, e.g., for Internet access, in which the District is a member of the consortium). The Technology Services questions are as follows:  
District Level Plan/Core Foundations/Materials and Resources/Current Technology Services  
"Describe the District's current telecommunications services, hardware, software and other services used to deliver education. (What strengths and weaknesses, related to technology, have been identified?)"  
District Level Plan/Core Foundations/Materials and Resources/Future Technology Services  
"Describe what specific telecommunications services, hardware, software and other services will be needed to improve education? (Address how the District plans to take advantage of emerging technologies to improve education. Be sure to include the acquisition or implementation of such services/equipment within the District Action Plan.)"

**E-RATE TECH PLAN REQUIREMENT 4:** The plan must include an evaluation process that enables the school or library to monitor progress toward the specified goals and make mid-course corrections in response to new developments and opportunities and they arise.

CROSSWALK TO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN WEB APPLICATION: As with Requirements 1 and 2, Requirement 4 can be addressed under District Level "View Action Plan". For each technology-related Action Step you have delineated, use the "indicator of implementation" to define how you will MONITOR the implementation of your plan to ensure that what you planned to happen is occurring in the manner and timeframe originally scoped. For each technology-related Goal (or overarching Goal supported by at least one technology-related Strategy and/or Action Step), use "indicators for effectiveness" to define how you will EVALUATE the efficacy of your implementation in realizing your Goal. As with any dynamic planning process, mid-course corrections and accommodations may be made at any time by amending the affected areas of the Action Plan.

**(Prior) E-RATE TECH PLAN REQUIREMENT 5:** The plan must provide a sufficient budget to acquire and support the non-discounted elements of the plan: the hardware, software, professional development and other services that will be needed to implement the strategy.

CROSSWALK TO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN WEB APPLICATION: Although E-rate no longer requires a budget be included as part of the planning process, revenue and expenditures for these items must be included in the LEA's annual budget. Therefore, in order to gain a better perspective of ALL anticipated costs which will assist with the budgeting process, LEA are encouraged to incorporate these costs in the Proposed Cost/Funding by Year section of each Action Step.

For questions on the Comprehensive Planning Process, please contact the Comprehensive Planning Support Center at [papanning@caiu.org](mailto:papanning@caiu.org) or 717-732-8403. For E-rate-specific questions, please contact Julie Tritt Schell at [jtschell@comcast.net](mailto:jtschell@comcast.net).

## **NonPublic School Entity Technology Plan Approval**

PDE does not review or approve educational technology plans for non-public and private schools or public libraries. Such entities should refer to the E-rate Certified Technology Plan Approver List for organizations that have agreed to serve as technology plan approvers for their entity-type.