Understanding E-Rate:
Important Details and Resources

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What is E-Rate?

The Schools and Libraries Program, more commonly known as “E-Rate,” is part of the Universal Service Fund that is overseen by the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC). E-Rate assists eligible schools and libraries with discounts on telecommunications, internal connections, and Internet access.

Schoology makes every effort to keep the following information current, though because E-Rate can change at any time, please be sure to verify this information on the USAC website. USAC determines E-Rate eligibility, not Schoology, so please visit their E-Rate pages for the most up-to-date information about the program.

What Makes Schoology Eligible for E-Rate?

An LMS’s E-Rate eligibility is determined by specific services and functionality offered to its customers. Though not all of Schoology’s LMS is eligible for E-Rate funding, **81% of Schoology’s features and services are eligible.** They are categorized under “Web Hosting” on the Eligible Services List (ESL).

Schoology’s eligible features and services include:

- District and School Web Hosting/Cloud Service
  - Digital Storage
  - API Access
  - District and School Webpages
- Class Profiles/Webpages
  - Assignment and Event Creation
  - Online Dropboxes
- School, Course, Group, and Personal Calendars
- User Connections (Personal Networks)
• Parent/Guardian Access
• Messaging
  o Private Messaging
  o Email and SMS Text Notifications
• Administrative Features
  o District Management
  o Privacy Control and Word Filters
  o Email Address and Username Support
  o User Management
• Custom Branding/Domain

For more information on what features and services are E-Rate eligible, please see USAC’s ESL for 2013.

What Features and Services of Schoology Are Not E-Rate Eligible?
Many of Schoology’s features are E-Rate eligible because they support the creation and management of secure website profiles and content. The 19% of Schoology’s features and services not eligible for E-Rate funding are covered in the paragraph below.

The ESL outlines what services and features are NOT eligible for E-Rate funding in the following statement from their 2013 list:

“The parts of a web hosting service that include, but are not limited to, any portion of tools, capabilities or integration with other systems such as: Student Information Systems (SIS); databases; student attendance or grades or grade management; course scheduling; tests or testing systems; on-line/interactive education systems; and learning/education management systems. (An eligible web hosting service will also not include support for the applications necessary to run online classes or collaborative meetings).”
How Do I Apply for E-Rate Funding?

Before you apply for E-Rate funding, it is important to understand how E-Rate funding works. According to the rules, applicants must carry out an open, competitive bidding process. The applicants must develop a Request for Proposal (RFP), complete Form 470, and evaluate the bids being received without aid from a service provider.

**Note**: Make sure that the list of required features and services you request includes both E-Rate eligible and ineligible features and services.

You can see the whole E-Rate application process from beginning to end in the flow chart below or by viewing USAC’s full size E-Rate Application Flow Chart. You can also find instructions and links for this process on USAC’s E-Rate Applicants page.
A Few Highlights from the E-Rate Application Process

The E-Rate application process begins when you have completed a Description of Services Requested and Certification Form 470. You can access instructions and the form online at USAC’s Schools and Libraries application center.

1. Once the 28-day waiting period from the date of filing has passed, and you have chosen your service provider, you will need to complete Form 471—a Description of Services Ordered. Instructions on how to fill out Form 471 can be found at USAC’s page on filing the FCC Form 471.

2. If you choose Schoology as your service provider, your representative will provide the exact cost allocation breakdown.
   - On Form 471, Schoology’s eligible services are categorized under “Internet Access.”
   - Be aware of the filing deadlines for Form 471, Item 21 attachments, and cost allocations by checking USAC’s website.
   - Your contract with Schoology, beginning on July 1, will most often be finalized prior to completing Form 471.

   **Note:** All E-Rate contracts for Schoology services will begin on July 1 of every year.

3. USAC will notify both parties when the funding commitment has been approved. The next step for you is to complete a Receipt of Service Confirmation Form 486.

4. Schoology’s services in E-Rate contracts can be paid for in one of two ways. Option one is preferred, so please notify us BEFORE signing the contract if you want to choose Option two.

   a. Option one—You pay Schoology the total amount in full. You then file a Billed Applicant Reimbursement Form 472 and notify your Schoology representative. Schoology will approve the form electronically. USAC will transfer the payment to Schoology, and Schoology will promptly reimburse you.
b. Option two—Schoology invoices you for a portion of the total cost. Schoology then invoices USAC for the rest.

Only USAC is authorized to determine E-Rate eligibility and to speak for the E-Rate program. Please visit the Schools and Libraries (E-Rate) pages of the USAC website for any further information regarding the program. It is important to fully understand and follow USAC’s guidelines to achieve the best possible results.

If you have any questions about E-Rate, please direct them to the Schools and Libraries Program of the Universal Service Fund.