

School Connectivity

2024 REPORT SUMMARY



North Carolina Department of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION



The North Carolina School Connectivity Initiative (SCI) ensures reliable internet access for every public school classroom statewide. Led by the NC Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI), SCI provides PSUs with cooperative purchasing, training, technical support, and essential services like network engineering, content filtering, and firewalls. The SCI team works closely with PSUs and external partners to optimize funding, ensure program compliance, and equitable connectivity throughout the state. Over the past 18 years, North Carolina has become a national leader in equitable school connectivity, leveraging the FCC’s E-Rate program for maximum funding per student. This summary covers the State Fiscal Year 2024 (SFY24) and calendar years 2023 through 2024. To access the full report visit: go.ncdpi.gov/SCI-24Report

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- **190** PSUs submitted 498 requests for E-Rate
- **\$92M** sought in total with \$69M from the FCC
- **75%** is the average E-Rate discount for NC PSUs

\$4.52

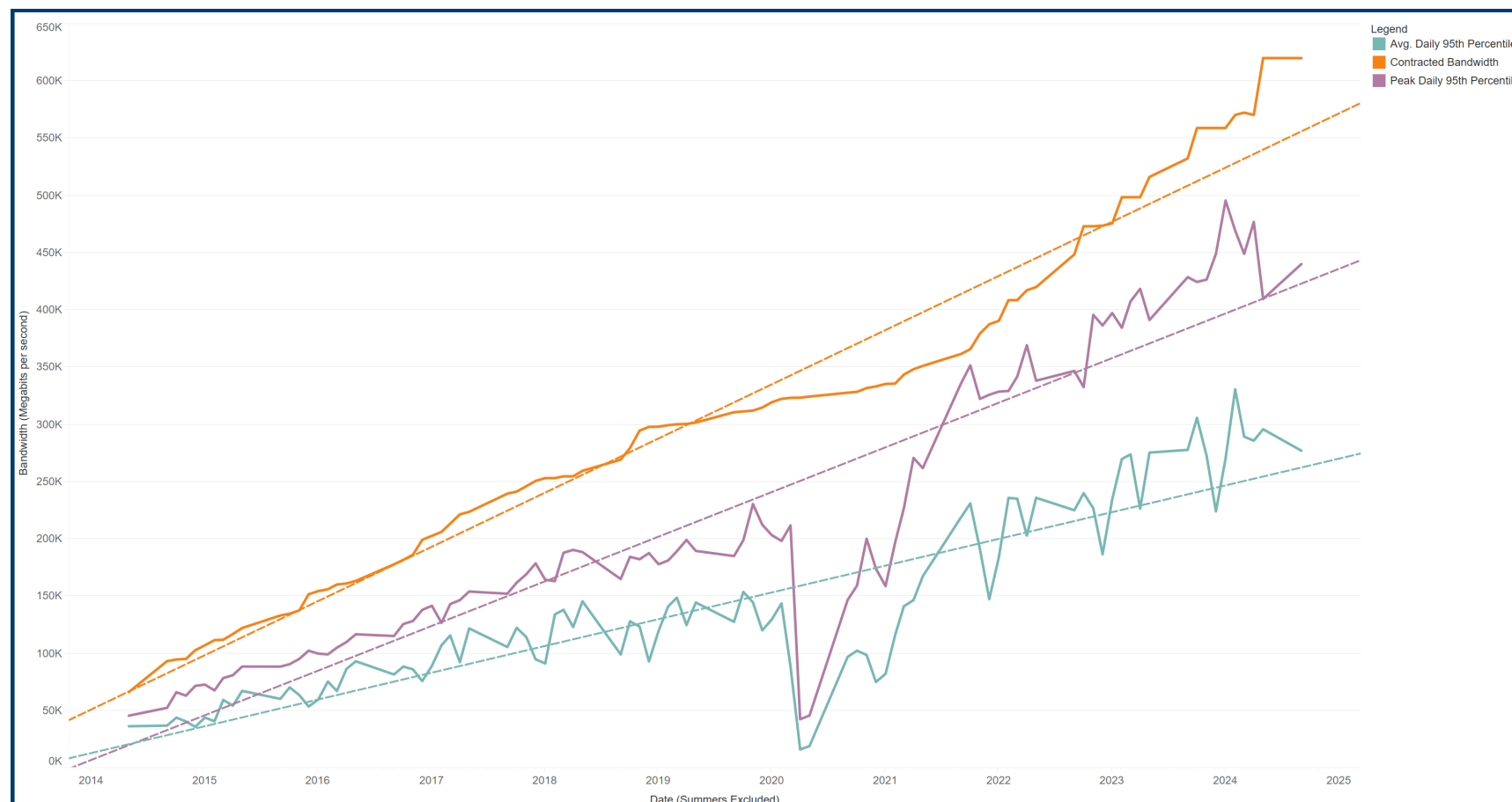
RECEIVED IN VALUE FOR
EVERY \$1 SPENT ON
E-RATE ELIGIBLE
SERVICES

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Line Item	Total Cost	E-Rate Portion	State Portion
Category 1 Consortium Internet	\$11.63	\$9.04	\$2.95
Category 1 School Fiber Connections (WAN)	\$27.45	\$21.44	\$6.01
Category 2 Classroom Connections (Wi-Fi)	\$57.28	\$44.57	\$12.71
E-Rate Eligible Totals	\$96.36	\$75.05	\$21.31
Identity & Access Management	\$1.82	*	\$1.82
Client Network Engineering	\$1.80	*	\$1.80
Program Administration ERC, FFL, FI, NCDPI	\$1.23	*	\$1.23
Firewall Services	\$2.91	*	\$2.91
Content Filtering Services	\$5.34	*	\$5.34
Endpoint Protection Services	\$3.75	*	\$3.75
Cybersecurity Training	\$0.56	*	\$0.56
NC DIT Administrative Fee	\$0.20	*	\$0.20
E-Rate Ineligible Totals	\$17.61	*	\$17.61
Grand Totals	\$113.97	\$75.05	\$38.92

All values in millions, rounded. Unaudited
*Not E-Rate Eligible

BANDWIDTH UTILIZATION



Between May 2023 and May 2024, contracted bandwidth grew from **515 Gbps** to **560 Gbps** and to over **620 Gbps** by September 2024, reflecting SCI's ability to provide scalable internet access to K-12 schools. The network is designed to handle usage spikes, such as during end-of-grade testing, while maintaining efficiency through aggregated access across all PSUs. A per-student capacity goal of 1 Mbps per student has been proposed by various national coalitions and the FCC. SCI employs a capacity management process based upon data-driven predictions and demonstrated need through continuous utilization monitoring. This has proven to be a much more efficient and cost-effective approach.

8.7%

2025 RECOMENDATIONS



Fund Cybersecurity for Resources Already being Utilized

SCI recommends that the shared resources already in place, be funded on a recurring basis. Without additional funding, many schools may resort to reduced function cybersecurity solutions which may leave them vulnerable to attack and increase cybersecurity insurance premiums.



FCC Category Two Budget Adjusted for Inflation in 2025

Increase the recurring funding for Category Two in the SCI appropriation by \$2.5 million beginning in FY2026. Increasing these funds will ensure that every possible E-Rate dollar available is consumed by the PSUs. For every dollar added in this appropriation, the state will receive about \$4 of total expenditures for classroom Wi-Fi and in-the-school-building wired networking.

CONTACTS

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