

**Ohio Library Council
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

ITEM NO.: **6.C**

MEETING DATE: **Mar. 14, 2025**

SUBJECT: **OPLIN Report**

SUBMITTED BY: **Don Yarman**

REPORT FOR INFORMATION

E-Rate Miscellany

- The 471 Window to request services for July 2025 – June 2026 will close on Wednesday, March 26.
- If requesting coverage for hotspot purchases and services (from your own 470 or from one of the statewide bids OPLIN received), be aware that funding will likely be available only for one year—or less. Not only does FCC Chairman Carr oppose this program expansion, and will likely end it once the fifth FCC commissioner Olivia Trusty is confirmed, but [Senator Cruz has issued a resolution to nullify the order](#).
- Despite this, I think it's worth the effort to apply for hotspot discounts. Our applications will firm the value of the program, both to Congress and to the vendors who created the new bids that align with program rules. Even without E-Rate discounts, the vendor proposals do offer libraries significant cost savings over current service plans.
- The Supreme Court's review of the constitutionality of E-Rate will take place March 26. As a reminder, the 5th Circuit found that USF is a "tax" and that the FCC's delegation of admin responsibilities to USAC is unconstitutional. Appellate courts in the 6th and 11th Circuit courts had previously upheld the USF funding system as constitutional. A decision from the Supreme Court is likely before June 30, 2025.

Statewide Web Based Digital Skills RFP

Broadband Ohio released an RFP for a digital literacy training platform (Northstar or equivalent) in February, and received five proposals before the deadline. OPLIN is part of the evaluation committee to select the platform that will be available from public libraries and will support the state's digital literacy education efforts in correctional facilities. Final approval of grant funds to support this project may be further delayed due to administration changes at federal agencies.