



# Maximizing eligibility for Federal Funds

Title I, E-Rate, NSLP

Leadership Day

August 3, 2017

# Millions of Federal dollars are being left on the table due to incomplete measurement of eligibility

- AoC's measurement of Federal fund eligibility -- currently -- comes only through NSLP applicants
- 113 of 178 AoC schools provide an NSLP program.
  - But not all families actually apply to the program
- At the 65 AoC schools with no NSLP program, we capture no Federal fund eligibility information

**With your leadership, we must get 100% measurement this Fall to maximize fund access**



# Two paths to maximum eligibility measurement

- At schools with no NSLP program: we are creating very simple, confidential household income survey to measure eligibility.
  - Need 100% survey participation
  - Survey link distributed to families electronically; available in English/Spanish
- At schools with NSLP program: driving maximum NSLP program applications is first goal
  - But any family not applying to NSLP will need to fill out household income survey

**Districts and dioceses across the country have long adopted this annual practice.**

# The household income survey is short & simple

- Head and size of household
- Name, grade, AoC school of K-12 children in household
- Is annual income below NSLP threshold?
  1. If yes, then five Yes/No questions; then survey complete
  2. If no, then survey complete

**100% collection of NSLP applications and/or Household Income Surveys will be due Sept. 15**

# Massive amounts of Federal monies routed to Title I

- \$15B nationally; \$260M to Chicago; \$18M just to private schools in Chicago
- Under current administration, future Title IIA funding may be eliminated, but budget may be allocated over to Title I
- Which shines an even greater light on our need to fully measure Title I eligibility

# E-Rate funding opportunity is significant/urgent as IT infrastructure investments sorely needed

- Barely one-third of our schools have IT infrastructure in place for 21<sup>st</sup> century learning
- AoC schools have large amounts of E-Rate Cat. 2 budget available to invest in IT infrastructure.
  - \$6M in total; \$40K/school
- FCC's current 5-year budget is ending FY19; future funding likely but amounts/allocations are uncertain.

**Maximizing the E-rate application ask *and* the actual E-rate funding are critical for academic excellence**



# Three-pronged approach to maximize E-rate funding and IT investments

## Current situation

Current reimbursement rate leaves schools with challenging out of pocket costs needed to fund E-rate investments



## Mission imperatives

Max. E-rate Reimbursement rate above 70%

Many schools either by pass the E-rate Cat. 1 and Cat. 2 grant application or forego actual E-rate awards granted to them



**Max. the E-Rate Ask:** Principals (or delegate) spend short, focused time with SBTC over next 8 weeks to craft needed IT infrastructure needs

Even with lower out of pocket costs, schools still often need to raise \$ to invest in these IT upgrades



Schools must start now to finance IT investments, which will need funding 18 or more months out



# Detailed topics to cover today

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1. Process and schedule to maximize eligibility measurement
  - Household Income Survey
  - NSLP applications – Kelly Lothian, Senior Customer Relations Manager, FSP
2. Time permitting: Process and schedule to maximize E-Rate grant awards and usage

## Not Covered:

- Process to maximize school-level access to Title I funds or in-kind services
  - Katrina McDermott, Director of Federal Programs (KMcDermott@archchicago.org)



# Recommended techniques to measure eligibility of all enrolled families

- Communicate that NSLP and/or Household Income Survey is a new, standard process; regular part of registration or back to school orientation
  - “Every family must either apply to NSLP or fill out Household Income Survey”
- Message should emphasize:
  - The urgency to maximize our school’s funding and associated academic benefits to students and learning
    - Low/no poverty schools still benefit from complete reporting (E-rate)
  - Absolute confidentiality of information.
    - Names collected to confirm entire enrollment has been measured.
    - But names not submitted to E-rate or Title agencies

**OCS will provide sample communication that Principals can employ and customize**

# Process highlights: Household Income (HHI) Survey

- Household Income Survey
  - Standard electronic link sent to parents in any form (included in email, posted to website/blogs, embedded in Powerschool)
  - School will also provide parents access to on-line survey submission at school events: *E.g.*, Back to school, new parent orientation, packet pickup.
    - Least optimal but perhaps required: providing and collecting hard copy of surveys.
  - On a rolling basis through August & mid-Sept.:
    - Daily HHI survey results sent back to Principals, who will need to compare names against a) all enrolled names and b) against all applicants to the NSLP program.



# Process highlights: Nat'l School Lunch Prog. (NSLP)

- CEP Schools Only
  - 32 schools in FY18 are part of the CEP program, where every student is eligible for all free meals.
  - But for Title I/E-rate eligibility: those schools who -- on their own -- have a direct certification rate below 62.5% must have families who are not direct certified fill out the Household Income Survey (see example)
  - In early to mid Sept., FSP automatically checks which of your students are directly certified.
    - They will notify each CEP Principal which of your enrolled students are NOT directly certified and therefore need to fill out a HHI survey.



# Key Next Steps: Measuring Federal fund eligibility

- Week of Aug. 7:
  - Sample Principal communications to families
  - Household Income Survey link to distribute to families
- Between Sept. 8-15:
  - FSP picks up NSLP applications from schools directly
- After Sept. 15:
  - School's food service staff are asked to mail NSLP applications to FSP



# Key Next Steps: E-rate FY19 Application

- August through September
  - SBTC sets on-site survey, review and E-rate Cat. 1 and Cat. 2 scoping session with Principal or delegate
- October
  - Our FY19 E-rate reimbursement rate is updated, confirming the lower proportion of FY19 E-rate investments that will be the school's out of pocket responsibility
  - Schools start planning for and communicating the long term funding plan for (all) IT infrastructure investments

