Digital Wish and BrightBytes Offer Free Survey so Schools can Qualify for $7 Billion in Tech Funding

Survey is sent through the parent notification system and assesses the need for home technology, so schools can apply for funding during summer vacation

MILTON, DE, US, July 2, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Digital Wish is partnering with BrightBytes, the leading data and analytics platform for education, to offer schools a way to access the $7 billion in Federal funding, one of the largest funding pools ever allocated to close the digital divide in America. Schools simply visit Digital Wish and request a single-link survey designed to collect vital information on student home technology needs, thus satisfying a critical requirement to qualify for funds.

FREE SURVEY AT DIGITAL WISH

Send it through your **Emergency Notification System** to get your share of **$7 Billion** in EdTech funding.

Do the technology needs assessment for your ECF application.

URGENT

Digital Wish Solving the Digital Divide   **BrightBytes**®

Schools can request a free survey and send it through the parent notification system so that schools can prepare to apply for their share of $7 billion in tech funding.

> "...many schools will return from summer break to find they have missed one of the biggest funding opportunities that has ever existed to close the digital divide."
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> *Heather Chirtea, Executive Director, Digital Wish*

The BrightBytes survey is easily distributed with a single link using the schools' emergency parent notification system, posting on the district website, or by any other communication vehicle. Administrators can reach disconnected parents by text message over the summer holiday to record the need for home hotspots and computers for America's school children.

The guidelines for the $7 billion ECF (Emergency Connectivity Fund) were released just as schools were going on summer break, the busiest time of the year for educators. The application deadline is August 13th, just as school staff will be returning from summer vacation.

"We are grateful to our politicians for passing the $7 billion in funding; however, many schools, especially the smaller districts, don't yet know about the funding and will return from summer break to find they have missed one of the biggest funding opportunities that has ever existed to close the digital divide," said Heather Chirtea, Executive Director of Digital Wish.

Spread the word! Schools can get help with their application for their share of $7 billion in funding.

To apply, schools are required to quantify the number of students who need internet coverage and computing devices at home. BrightBytes will assist schools before, during and after the data collection process and will immediately send school administrators a survey report at the close of collection to support their application for ECF funding.

According to John Harrington, CEO of Funds for Learning, "It's nearly impossible to reach parents over the summer and the funding application

This $7 billion in emergency connectivity funding is the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow for education technology, but schools need to apply over the summer.

requires schools to assess students' needs for hot spots and computers. This survey is the fastest way we can think of to get the needs assessment completed while everyone is on vacation."

Funds for Learning, the premiere E-rate consulting firm, worked with the BrightBytes team to craft the free survey in the language of the ECF funding guidelines, so that schools could easily align their data collection directly to the requirements of the grant application.

On top of the challenges presented by the summer application window, funding will be administered through the existing federal E-rate program, which many schools don't qualify for, and even more don't apply due to the complex application process. Many schools won't apply because they don't think they qualify for E-rate, or they lack staff qualified to fill out the complex application. Digital Wish is putting out a call to everyone to let schools know that the E-rate application has been simplified, and the rules have changed. Now all public, charter, and private (nonprofit) schools and public libraries qualify for the ECF funding.

"ECF funding is the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow for education technology," said Sheryl Abshire, former CTO of Calcasieu Parish Public Schools. She is an educator who has been an outspoken advocate for addressing equity in technology resources for her entire career. "This opportunity is too important to pass up, even if school administrators need to take a little break from summer vacation to do it. There has never been a funding opportunity like this before."

BrightBytes has generously extended the FREE survey offer to all schools in America. According to Traci Burgess, CEO of BrightBytes, "Our mission is to transform data into actionable insights. We are proud to empower U.S. educators and support their efforts to apply for this unprecedented funding opportunity that could close the digital divide for millions of American schoolchildren."

Request the free survey: Visit www.digitalwish.org

Watch the webinar on how to register and administer the survey:
https://youtu.be/tc2DkNED4Hg

Watch webinars on "Solving the Digital Divide", including guidance on getting your share of $7 Billion in education technology funding: https://www.digitalwish.com/dw/digitalwish/webinars

About BrightBytes
The BrightBytes mission is to actualize the expansive promise of education by transforming data into actionable insights that positively impact students' academic and overall well-being. BrightBytes believes that the promise of education expands far beyond academics. We empower you with easy data insights, so that you can empower your students to live up to their potential, enjoy their learning experience, and emerge ready to take on the world. For more information, please visit www.brightbytes.net to learn more, or reach out to Ken Goldstein, ken@brightbytes.net.

About Funds for Learning
Funds for Learning, LLC, is a compliance firm specializing in the federal E-rate funding program for schools and libraries. Funds for Learning supports E-rate stakeholders in all 50 states, helping them navigate the application process to receive support for internet access and Wi-Fi connectivity. To deliver application feedback to the Federal Communications Commission and Congress, Funds for Learning coordinates the annual E-Rate Trends Report. For more information, please visit www.fundsforlearning.com or contact Brian Stephens, bstephens@fundsforlearning.com

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