

For Immediate Release:

SIIA Communications Contact: Laura Greenback, 410.533.1943, lgreenback@siia.net

PR Contact: Charlene Blohm, C. Blohm & Associates, 608.216.7300, charlene@cblohm.com

SIIA Releases 2012 Guide to the E-rate Program

Guide and accompanying April 26 webinar will feature strategies for software and technology companies to help schools and libraries best leverage the E-rate program

Washington, D.C. (April 11, 2012) – The Software & Information Industry Association (SIIA), the principal trade association for the software and digital content industries, today released an updated guide to the E-rate program in partnership with [Funds For Learning](#).

The guide will help companies navigate the complex E-rate program during a time when technology use in schools is evolving rapidly, and E-rate demand is outpacing available funding nearly two to one.

Using E-rate funds, libraries and public and private schools receive a 20-90 percent discount for telecommunications services, Internet access, and internal connections technology. Between 1998 and 2010, over \$59 billion in E-rate funding has been requested.

The SIIA E-rate Guide will help software and technology companies – and their education customers – manage changes to this ever-evolving program. The Guide provides background information on E-rate rules and eligible services opportunities for software publishers, as well as an analysis of both the current E-rate market and how E-rate funds affect school technology purchases.

"The SIIA E-rate Guide will be useful for any software or technology company that wants to gain a deeper insight into how the E-rate program works, and how school districts can leverage the savings from the E-rate program for further technology purchases," said Peter Kaplan, vendor & regulatory solutions executive at Funds For Learning.

Since its inception in 1998, the E-rate program has helped close the digital divide, especially for students in high-poverty and rural communities. However, while demand for E-rate funds has increased by 108 percent from \$2.36 billion in 1998 to \$4.65 billion in 2011, the available funding has remained nearly the same at \$2.25 billion plus inflation starting in 2010.

"Now, more than ever, it is vital for software and technology companies to understand the nuances of the E-rate program," said Mark Schneiderman, senior director of education policy at SIIA. "SIIA remains focused on helping schools and libraries access needed technologies through the E-rate, and will continue to work with education, government, and industry leaders

to support the stability and growth of the E-rate program.”

GUIDE: SIIA’s “Guide to the E-rate” is available in SIIA’s eStore for free to SIIA members and for a fee to other software and technology companies. The Executive Summary is available for free to everyone. Visit <http://www.siia.net/estore/> .

WEBINAR: SIIA, in partnership with SellingtoSchools.com, will host a free webinar on April 26, 3-4 p.m. EST, providing all software and technology companies with an update on the E-rate program and an overview of the SIIA Guide. Visit <http://siia.net/events/> .

About SIIA

The Software & Information Industry Association (SIIA) is the principal trade association for the software and digital content industry. SIIA provides global services in government relations, business development, corporate education, and intellectual property protection to more than 500 leading software and information companies. The SIIA Education Division serves and represents more than 180 member companies that provide software, digital content and other technologies that address educational needs. The Division shapes and supports the industry by providing leadership, advocacy, business development opportunities and critical market information. For more information, visit www.siia.net/education .

About Funds For Learning

Funds For Learning, LLC, is an E-rate compliance firm specializing in guiding E-rate applicants and service providers through the complex and ever-changing E-rate regulatory process. With more than 150 combined years of experience in providing professional advice and assistance relating to the E-rate program, Funds For Learning exists to provide high-quality solutions for the needs of E-rate stakeholders. The company was established in 1997 and is headquartered in Edmond, Okla. For more information, visit www.fundsforlearning.com or phone 405-341-4140.