

## Prepared by Dr. Jeffrey Alstadt

### Approval of Telecommunications Modernization & Procurement Contract

#### Purpose

To present the Board of Education with a 36-month telecommunications modernization and procurement contract with Ficek Electric & Communication Systems, Inc. for formal approval. This contract transitions the district from out-of-contract infrastructure to an integrated, secure cloud platform, delivering substantial operating budget relief.

#### Background and Information

An internal audit previously revealed that our current telecommunications contracts have expired, leaving the district on inefficient, out-of-contract rates across multiple providers, including Frontier and AT&T. Total current expenditures across all standalone lines average \$5,890.16 monthly.

Following last month's informational update, the administration utilized the flexibility provided under Illinois School Code (105 ILCS 5/10-20.21(a)(vii)), which exempts telecommunications and data processing equipment from rigid competitive bidding and formal RFP mandates. This allowed the district to negotiate directly with vendors to prioritize technical reliability, modern safety features, and vendor stability. Through this competitive process, Ficek Electric was selected to modernize communications across our administrative office, Northlawn, Centennial, and Kimes facilities.

#### Financial Impact

The finalized agreement delivers the exact operational efficiency and general fund relief projected during the initial audit.

- The contract carries a total one-time implementation and hardware cost of \$3,963.94. The recurring monthly service cost for the integrated platform is locked at \$3,164.83, inclusive of all surcharges and fees.
- Transitioning to this cloud platform reduces our monthly telecommunications expenditures from \$5,890.16 to \$3,164.83.
- This operational shift secures an ongoing, guaranteed savings of \$2,725.33 each month, translating to over \$32,700 in annual general fund relief.

#### Key Project Benefits

The final agreement outlines structural adjustments that significantly upgrade district safety, functionality, and compliance.

- The platform provides upgraded Yealink hardware and softphone capabilities across all classrooms and offices, eliminating unnecessary individual cell hardware costs.
- Enhanced communication tools will streamline district outreach, attendance management, and centralized parent engagement channels.
- The system provides full E911 compliance under Kari's Law and the RAY BAUM's Act by immediately transmitting exact dispatchable school locations to emergency personnel.
- Robust cybersecurity protections are included, featuring multi-layer encryption, two-factor authentication, and automated archiving retention to maintain regulatory alignment.

#### Next Steps

Upon board approval, the administration will coordinate with Ficek Electric to schedule installation and manage the porting of local numbers to ensure a seamless operational transition across all district buildings.

**Administrative Recommendation**

The administration recommends that the Board of Education formally approve the 36-month telecommunications modernization and procurement contract with Ficek Electric & Communication Systems, Inc. as presented.