New Jersey Digital Readiness for Learning & Assessment Project

The power of cooperative technology purchasing

Piscataway, New Jersey, Tenth Anniversary Update, November 4, 2025

The Educational Services Commission of New Jersey (ESCNJ) has completed the **Tenth Year** of its **New Jersey Digital Readiness for Learning & Assessment Project (NJDRLAP)**. This annual summary provides the latest program updates with information current through June 30, 2025.

NJDRLAP was launched in 2015 with backing from the NJ Department of Education to improve broadband access for K-12 schools across the state. Today, NJDRLAP has become a model of success for improving technology through cooperative purchasing. The NJDRLAP initiative has **helped hundreds of schools and municipalities save millions of dollars** while significantly increasing their technology access, and it's still getting better! Here are the most recent results.

Ten Years of Technology Growth & Savings

- **Twenty-two new organizations** in education and local government used the NJDRLAP co-op to purchase high-speed broadband service since the previous report, **an increase of 5%**. That brings the total to **502 NJDRLAP participants statewide**, another co-op record.

- K-12 institutions continue to take advantage of the convenience and low pricing of NJDRLAP, with **15 new school districts & four independent schools** joining the program.

- NJDRLAP remains the most popular and trusted Internet service contract for public schools, with **373 districts** using the co-op program. That's **63% of all New Jersey school districts!**

- The ESCNJ helps its members maximize funding from the federal E-rate program. To date, NJDRLAP participants have received **$28.9 million in E-rate funds** with ESCNJ assistance.

- **Three new local agencies** joined NJDRLAP last year, bringing the total to **63 municipal organizations** accessing co-op services for broadband and advanced telecommunications.

- NJDRLAP offers **six service providers** helping co-op customers connect with high-speed solutions: Comcast, CherryRoad, DNS, Lightpath, Planet Networks, and Xtel Communications.

- The ESCNJ has provided an average ten-year value of **$16.2 million per year** in NJDRLAP services to New Jersey schools and municipalities to purchase essential technology services.

A Decade of NJDRLAP Success

Here are some facts about the NJDRLAP program, current as of June 30, 2025.

- No district is left behind. The NJDRLAP program offers **high-speed Internet access to every school district in New Jersey**, plus fiber connectivity to hundreds of schools statewide.

- Connection speeds keep getting faster, with many organizations now exceeding 2 Gigabits per second (Gbps). In fact, the average available bandwidth for K-12 schools is now **2,078 Megabits per second (Mbps),** up from 1,697 Mbps in the previous NJDRLAP contract.

- While bandwidth is up, costs are down. The **average monthly price for Internet access is $126 less than the prior contract**, cutting prices from $1,450.08 to $1,324.25 per month.

- Before NJDRLAP was launched, New Jersey school districts paid $10.76 per Mbps per month for Internet bandwidth, on average. Today, the average price for schools is $0.64 per Mbps. **NJDRLAP helped reduced school Internet bandwidth prices 94%** over the past ten years.

Equitable Access

One of the main objectives of the NJDRLAP co-op is to make high-speed Internet access available to every student in New Jersey. The program is well on its way to achieving that goal.

During the first year of NJDRLAP, 137 school districts and eight independent schools signed up for service. Since then, NJDRLAP has added **236 districts, 63 schools, four libraries, and two colleges** that have used the co-op for faster and more affordable telecommunications services.

Altogether, **70 public charter schools, non-public schools and educational non-profits** have taken advantage of NJDRLAP. Participants are from every county in the state, representing schools big and small, rural and urban, wealthy and poor, from pre-kindergarten to high school.

Since 2015, **502 educational and government institutions** have benefited from the NJDRLAP co-op. The contract has helped thousands of citizens get better government services and helped **approximately 860,000 students** by delivering world-class Internet access to their classrooms.

NJDRLAP has been helping New Jersey schools bridge the digital divide. Through its creative partnerships with local providers, NJDRLAP enabled districts to offer new opportunities for at-home teaching and learning. For example, **NJDRLAP service providers helped dozens of school districts connect thousands of student devices** during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The ESCNJ has consultants available to help schools navigate the complexities of E-Rate. So far, **1,206 E-rate funding requests have been disbursed** using NJDRLAP E-rate applications.

Better Infrastructure

Before the NJDRLAP program began, more than 17% of participating schools were struggling with copper lines to connect to the Internet. Today, **every school district has access to fiber**.

By bundling the demand for advanced telecom services, the ESCNJ co-op helps local telecom providers make more productive investments in the New Jersey economy, which benefits businesses, hospitals, and individual citizens, as well as schools and government organizations.

This year for its 10th anniversary, the NJDRLAP co-op will **exceed $162 million in total contract value** for the shared benefit of its members, service providers, and New Jersey taxpayers.

Faster Speeds

The NJDRLAP program has significantly enhanced the availability of high-speed Internet access to K-12 schools. Before the program began, the average Internet connection for participating school entities was 348 Megabits per second (Mbps). Today, NJDRLAP contracts average 2,078 Mbps. That's almost **six times more Internet bandwidth available per co-op participant.**

Besides providing Internet access at average speeds exceeding 2 Gigabits per second, the NJDRLAP initiative enables schools and municipalities to connect multiple campus locations and government buildings together for super-fast information exchange. The NJDRLAP program **delivers fiber-optic circuits of 1,000 Mbps or more to hundreds of organizations.** These upgraded circuits are meeting the "need-for-speed" for public entities across New Jersey.

Lower Costs

These days, prices are increasing for just about everything that public organizations need to buy. But the ESCNJ co-op is holding prices steady for technology services. On average, the newest NJDRLAP contract **cut Internet costs by 9% while increasing available bandwidth by 22%.**

According to E-Rate figures, **New Jersey school districts are saving $14.4 million per year** in reduced Internet prices compared to 2016 spending levels. That's almost **$25K per district.**

Bottom Line

NJDRLAP is helping school districts avoid $70 million in extra costs for Internet access. **That's enough savings for every New Jersey district to keep an extra teacher in the classroom!**[*]

---

[*]The difference between the pre-NJDRLAP price and current NJDRLAP price for Internet is $10/Mbps/mo. For a standard 1 Gbps connection, that equates to $120K per year per district or $70M statewide.

Learn More

The ESCNJ is continually working to improve the NJDRLAP program. Co-op members can purchase a range of services from the various NJDRLAP contracts, from residential broadband for at-home work and learning to ultra-fast connections that connect enterprise locations.

The NJDRLAP broadband contracts are secure for years to come. Contracts for high-speed Internet access and advanced telecommunications are ready now for the next two years. Co-op members can buy services with confidence knowing they have the best pricing available.

NJDRLAP works with E-Rate. Eligible school districts can receive deep discounts on their Internet purchases using the Universal Service Administrative Company discounts offered by the Federal Communications Commission. NJDRLAP contracts have their own E-Rate Forms 470s already posted to make purchasing safe and convenient for schools.

Purchasing from the NJDRLAP co-op contract is easier than ever. Visit the ESCNJ's new member's website (https://www.escnj.us/members) and select "Telecommunications" from the drop-down menu to access the NJDRLAP contract. Or contact a NJDRLAP representative below.

Contact Information

Paul DeAngelo
Assistant Business Administrator for
Cooperative Purchasing, ESCNJ
pdeangelo@escnj.us
732-777-9848 Ext. 7450

Kevin Dellicker
NJDRLAP Consultant
Dellicker Strategies, LLC
kevin@dellicker.com
484-788-1221

About Us

The Educational Services Commission of New Jersey | Leading the Way in Shared Services

The Educational Services Commission of New Jersey operates the most trusted and most comprehensive cooperative purchasing consortium in the state (NJ State-Approved Co-op #65MCESCCPS). **Every NJDRLAP purchase is an investment in local kids**. Visit: www.escnj.us

Dellicker Strategies | We Get Results

Dellicker Strategies is the consultant to the NJDRLAP program and an approved co-op provider (RFP ESCNJ 23/24-13). Dellicker specializes in helping organizations **upgrade their technology infrastructure, improve their cybersecurity, and manage complex technology programs** with a 10% co-op discount. The company is veteran-owned with 20+ years of experience serving schools, municipalities, and businesses. Visit: https://dellicker.com/escnj-contract.