SKOKIE 73.5

Elizabeth Meyer School • John Middleton Elementary School • Oliver McCracken Middle School

Firewall and Hybrid WAN RFP Q&A Response

General Firewall Information

Q: Are the existing firewalls at the McCracken hub being replaced or is this RFP only for deploying new at Middleton and Meyer?
A: The primary scope of the RFP focuses on Middleton and Meyer only. However, we are open to alternate bids that include replacing the existing single Palo Alto 3220 firewall at McCracken.

Q: If all are being replaced, would the new order be for (6) total firewalls to allow for an HA-pair at each location?
A: If you include McCracken in an alternate bid, we recommend including a high-availability (HA) pair at that site as well.

Q: Are you open to differing firewall models, and what interface capacity is required?
A: We prefer the same firewall model across all sites for consistency, but are open to differing models if there is a compelling cost or performance benefit. 10G interface availability is preferred on both WAN and LAN.

Site Information

Q: How many students/faculty/users are at each of the locations?
A: Approximate students and staff at each site are as follows:
- Meyer - 220 Students (PK-K) & 50 Staff
- Middleton - 496 Students (1st-5th) & 90 Staff
- McCracken - 333 Students (6th-8th) & 80 Staff

Q: What is the ISP circuit capacity and target bandwidth at each location?
A: The provider (ICN) will deliver a 10G circuit to both Middleton and Meyer via a last-mile provider. The firewalls should support 10G interfaces for compatibility, but actual throughput can range from 3-5 Gbps. RCN is the provider for McCracken, and the same specifications would apply to that site if included in an alternate bid.
The target ISP bandwidth (Up/Down) at each location is:
- Meyer: 1Gbps/3Gbps
- Middleton: 2Gbps/4Gbps
- McCracken: 2Gbps/4Gbps

Network Infrastructure & Connectivity

Q: Are your Meraki 425s routing now? If so, are they using OSPF or Static Routing - or a combination of both?
A: Yes, the majority of the environment uses OSPF with some static routing.

Q: Meyer Connectivity - can you describe in more detail what is meant by "a transit layer bridging traffic to McCracken"?
A: There is no direct connection between Meyer and McCracken.
- Currently, Meyer connects to Middleton via dark fiber, and then from Middleton to McCracken via another dark fiber link.
- To reach the public internet, Meyer traffic is forwarded through Middleton to McCracken, where it exits through the firewall.
- As we decommission the dark fiber and activate the new lit circuits, we plan to implement an IPsec tunnel to allow for local traffic between schools (e.g., print management, HVAC systems).
- Most traffic will route directly to public cloud services.

Firewall Features & Bandwidth Requirements

Q: What is the bandwidth expected for all of the required licensed features at each location?
- **Next-Generation Threat Prevention (IPS, malware scanning, sandboxing)**
- **Advanced URL Filtering**
- **Cloud-based threat intelligence updates**
- **Remote Access VPN licenses for IT staff**

A: While we do not have exact figures, we are looking for capabilities that support 3-5 Gbps for most licensed features.

Q: What is the expected bandwidth for HTTPS Inspection at each location?
A: 2-3 Gbps

VPN & Remote Access

Q: How many VPN users are expected, and what is the average concurrent usage?
A: We expect approximately 5-8 total users, with an average of 2 concurrent users during the workday and 1-4 concurrent users during off-hours.

Q: How many VPN Tunnels are expected at each location outside of the 3 schools connecting to one another?
A: Currently, we are only planning to transition the existing site-to-site connections (previously on dark fiber) to IPsec tunnels. However, we may require an additional tunnel in the future for anticipated public cloud infrastructure and/or potential capital planning that may impact facilities.

Other Considerations

Q: Would a centralized appliance/VM be acceptable for management of the firewalls or is cloud-based a hard requirement?
A: A cloud-based management solution for centralized visibility, accessibility, and scalability is highly preferred.

Q: What support and license terms are required? (1/3/5Y)
A: We would like to see 1-year and 3-year support and licensing options.

Q: Can you provide us with the TSF and stats dump file on the [existing McCracken] NGFW?
A: Not during the initial proposal phase.