

Questions About the Tri-Valley Consortium

TVDEC Mission:

- TVDEC members view distance education as a way to:
 - enhance learning opportunities
 - invigorate current curricular programs
 - increase educational opportunities for adult members of the community
 - further involve Nebraska citizens in their schools.
- What it is not - to promote the distance education technology.

Facts about the Tri-Valley Consortium

- TVDEC was formed in 1999
 - 32 school members (21 south - 11 north)
 - 3 ESUs, 7, 10, & 11
 - 2 higher education - Central Community College and UNK
- Additional Members
 - SEM - Amherst (Fall 2001)
 - Litchfield (Fall 2002)
 - St. Paul (Fall 2003)
 - Lexington & Grand Island DENC Applicants (2004)
- Systems/Contracts - Both JPEG and Analog systems are considered as old technologies. This means that they are no longer being manufactured.
 - TVDEC North -JPEG - Telecom transport carrier
 - 1 DS3 (45 MB) for transport -
 - \$1,042 + \$250 T1 Data = \$1,292 per month
 - TVDEC South - Analog - Cable transport carrier
 - 1 shared 10MB data line
 - \$775 per month
 - IP (St. Paul) - Cable transport carrier
 - 100 MB digital
 - \$1,570 per month
- Connection capabilities
 - JPEG Schools -
 - 10 TVDEC North Schools connected by gateways to
 - Central Distance Education Consortium - ESU 9 Hastings (9 schools)
 - Crossroads (2003 - 11 schools)
 - Northeast Distance Education Consortiums - 54 schools
 - 24 TVDEC south schools connected by gateways to
 - SNDLC - 60 schools + St. Paul
 - Including the Homestead National Park & Henry Doorley Zoo

What is the current contract obligations:

First it is important to realize that each individual school has a contract with their provider. consortium was organized on behalf of those schools but does not contract on their behalf. The contract includes both the video/audio transport and the internet transport.

In the fall of 1999, (August 1 is the anniversary date) service began for TVDEC south. The contract is a 4/4/2 contract which expires in 2009. What that means is that after four years the contract continues on until 2009 unless a contracting school notifies Charter/DFS 90 days before the anniversary date that they would like to discontinue the contract. In the event they do notify DFS/Charter of this intent to be removed from the contract, there is still a 3 year obligation.

TVDEC north has a similar agreement with the Telcos. The contract is four years but automatically rolls over one year at a time through 2009. In essence there is a 10 year contract.

Can a school get out of an existing contract?

The existing TVDEC south contract states that after 4 years if you provide notice 90 days prior to the anniversary date (August 1 - anniversary date) to DFS/Charter, the contract will not roll over adding an extra year. By contract, you would then have service for another 3 years.

In the event of a consolidation/merger, notification provided within 60 days of the dissolution, consolidation, or merger and they are responsible for remaining months of the contract. (No clause found concerning mergers for TVDEC north)

In the event that no funds or insufficient funds are appropriated or budgeted for any fiscal year, the user shall provide notice of such lack of funding to provider within 60 days of the decision to not fund or insufficiently fund. Cannot terminate and then seek service from a third party. Example - erate funds go away.

There are penalty costs incurred with breaking of the TVDEC north contract. Nothing is outlined in the TVDEC south contract for penalty.

Summary

1. The current jpeg and analog systems that are in place are no longer being made/installed.
2. The contracts that each member school has essentially runs through 2009.
3. The value or benefits to each school district varies.
4. We do have a limited number of class offerings and not many new additions since the consortium began.
5. That incentives for schools and teachers to offer more classes are few.
6. Students who participate in a distance education class will benefit because the process learned will probably be repeated in future education and vocational events.
7. That distance education is only a piece of the purchase you are making in this contract. Data/internet transportation and its benefits are essential services.
8. That with increased use of the distance education/data transport system, flexibility and mobility of this technology will become a necessity.

Tri-Valley Web Site - <http://tvdec.k12.ne.us>