

SIERRA SANDS UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT



District Office: 113 Felspar Avenue, Ridgecrest, CA 93555-3589

April 17, 1997

The Honorable Reed Hundt, Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW, Room 814
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Commissioner Hundt:

RE: CC Docket No. 96-45

I am writing to you in regard to the federal "E-Rate" Telecommunications Discount Program. I am a locally elected school board member from Sierra Sands Unified School District, and I would like to express my strong support for this program and the proposed regulations governing its implementation.

The Telecommunications Act of 1996 and the Federal-State Joint Board discount plan will guarantee that even the poorest schools will have access to the Internet and the ability to provide distance-learning opportunities. The \$2.25 billion a year will address the needs of schools across the country, and more importantly, the plan will bring telecommunications services directly to the classrooms where they can have the greatest impact on students. It is important to remember that each element of this plan is vital to the overall success of the discount program. Therefore, the inclusion of discounts for internal classroom connections should not be eliminated, nor should the size of the Universal Service Fund be reduced. As I am sure you are aware, this program is essential for preparing our students to enter the work force of tomorrow.

The E-Rate Telecommunications Discount Program is desperately overdue, and our students need these discounts for telecommunications services this year. I urge you and the other FCC commissioners to fully support the recommendations of the Joint Board and approve the proposed final regulations regarding the discount plan for universal service for schools and libraries.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

John Condos, Clerk
Board of Education

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