



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

EX. 100-01110111

Office of the Chief Academic Officer

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August 13, 1997 **DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL**

Ex Parte
Docket No. 93-61

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AUG 13 1997

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

The Honorable Rachelle B. Chong
Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW, Room 844
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Commissioner Chong:

I am writing with an urgent request: Please make sure that your decision in the LMS proceeding enhances our ability to use Part 15 wireless communications devices to bring the Internet and other on-line resources to classrooms within the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS).

The FCC is currently considering regulations that will directly effect Part 15 wireless communications. As the lead person guiding education technology programs for the DCPS's efforts to create a workforce and a student body which uses telecommunications technologies appropriately, I respectfully request that you consider the important role that Part 15 wireless communications services now play in our classrooms and will soon play in schools around the country.

At this time, DCPS employs the Ricochet modem solution in buildings that are not sufficiently wired for connectivity to the Internet. This description, of course, characterizes most of our schools; we expect to need to continue using such a solution for many years, as it will take well into the next decade before a terrestrial solution will be operable in all classrooms.

We also use the Ricochet modems in a laptop staff training arrangement. Staff receive a laptop outfitted with the Ricochet modem which they bring to training with them and then take home throughout the training period. This arrangement provides the staff members with access to the telecommunications services without the need to buy and

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install costly equipment and telephone lines in their homes, which is where teachers actually learn, at the same time that it allows us to turn any room in any facility into a high-tech training facility without the need for any renovation.

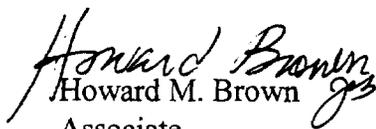
Ultimately, we should not be surprised to see the laptop computer become the only "notebook" which students will carry from classroom to classroom and from school to home; textbook materials on CD-ROM (or on even smaller media) will replace five pound textbooks. In such a scenario, the number of systems needed in a school and the number of drops needed to support a flexible, portable solution, are not even envisioned by many educators; however, such arrangements are clearly indicated.

In the current LMS proceeding, the FCC may finalize rules which will limit our ability to use Part 15 wireless communications services. In fact, the rules could lead to the shutting down of the service we are currently using if the network causes interference with the proposed LMS service.

Several changes to the Commission's proposed rules have been suggested to make sure that this does not happen. Most involve establishing a reasonable buffer zone or safe haven in which Part 15 devices can operate without regard to interference. Alternatively, the Commission might grant to education users the same protection it proposes to give to health and public safety uses of Part 15 communications services. By adopting one of these proposals the Commission will ensure that teachers and children in the District of Columbia and other local communities will continue to enjoy the benefits of wireless access to the Internet using Part 15 wireless communications services.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Howard M. Brown

Associate

Office of the Chief Academic Officer

cc: Ms. Suzanne Toller, Legal Adviser
William F. Caton, Acting Secretary