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JUN 15 1998

CC 96-45

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Distance Delivery Consortium

*Promoting distance education and
communication in Rural Alaska*



P.O. Box 2401 • Bethel, Alaska 99559 • (907) 543-4069 • (907) 543-5720 FAX

June 12, 1998

**To: FCC Commissioners, Senate Commerce Subcommittee - USF,
Alaska's Washington Delegation**

Fm: Member Agencies of the Distance Delivery Consortium

Re: No Delay to Subsidies for Rural Alaska!

Member agencies of the Consortium include: Rural School Districts, Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation, City and Tribal Governments, the University of Alaska, Public Radio and TV and over 15 Community Service Organizations and Corporate Sponsors. We live in the most remote region of the State of Alaska and comprise one of the most underserved regions of the country.

For almost five years, the member agencies of the Distance Delivery Consortium have made a concerted effort to obtain access to the National Information Infrastructure. Our organizations are all committed to the well being of the people of this region and have a critical need for access to and in the use of data resources for education, health care and basic communication needs .

For years, students, teachers, doctors, nurses, tribal and city administrators, the Army National Guard and the general public have anticipated the ability to access the 'information highway'. In a region with no roads, bridges, land lines or other infrastructure so common to the rest of the Nation, connecting to the Internet is vital and in many villages, the only possible link to public information resources. In this respect, the years of wait have seemed like an eternity. The lack of service has limited the social and economic development potentials in our Alaska Native communities.

Make no mistake, the demand for services and the increase in use of information technologies over this period has been substantial. The Consortium's regional email and bulletin board system has seen a five fold increase in traffic just over the last year. Still, no telecommunications provider has been willing to connect these communities to effective and useful Internet-based data networks.

No Delay to Subsidies for Rural Alaska

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No Internet Service Providers have been willing to provide cost effective 'real time' (above 14.4 Kbps dialup w/ marginal connect rates) connectivity to our villages. There was very little potential for service delivery to the people of SW Alaska.

Until the potential for USF subsidy and the E-rate appeared!

With the notion of a subsidized service on the table, we now have providers bringing high technology broadband potentials to our region and throughout the State of Alaska. The competitive telecommunications market place has been stimulated like never before. The 96 Act and the implications of USF subsidy for computer data services has facilitated tremendous growth and service potentials for our communities.

As an example.....AT&T Alascom was just awarded, through an extremely competitive bid process under the SLC plan, a contract for Internet service to one of the Consortium school districts. The contract is for service to twenty-six remote communities in the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta / Bering Sea region; an eighteen month contract totaling over 1.5 million dollars for satellite based 56Kb cell relay connectivity to every outlying site and shared T1 in the hub community of Bethel. Under the current plan, our region would be subsidized to a high level; up to 90% in most outlying communities. The only way any of our schools could afford this high cost service is via some support mechanism and the current USF subsidy does make it affordable to the community. It has also made it financially feasible for the telecom provider AT&T Alascom to build-out the necessary improvements to the infrastructure and offer the service.

We are very appreciative of Congress' support and the FCC's efforts towards bringing Internet access to our communities! We are also very willing to do our part to contribute to the concept of universal service and the goal of connecting all Americans. An example of this willingness can be found in Alaska's response to the issue of wiring schools. Technologists understand that building out local area networks (LANs) in the schools is critical to the dissemination of the data resources to be delivered by the USF FCC/SLC program. The State of Alaska, through the efforts of its Science and Technology Foundation, has contributed 3.9 million dollars cash and close to 6 million in matching support to wire our school facilities state-wide. Forty three districts, 400 schools and 6000 classrooms (70% of the State) have been wired. In response to costly satellite-based service offerings.....through the efforts of our Distance Delivery Consortium in SW Alaska we have created true working partnerships and cooperative effort to facilitate fund development and the support to build out local and State-wide infrastructure which enhances the effectiveness of the Internet service offerings subsidized by the USF. In the spirit of village cooperation, our Consortium has initiated the concept of 'shared-bandwidth resources'

throughout our region. By aggregating users onto the data 'pipe' being delivered to our village facilities we can ensure an equitable distribution and thereby a broader use of these costly services.

Our schools, health clinics, tribal and city governments, university rural campuses and other entities in our communities have aligned their respective organizations financially and socially for the implementation of the E-rate. We have huge investments in time and dollars already committed to the timelines established by the FCC/SLC and Health Corporation. Schools have committed to curriculum initiatives, health clinics have invested and installed hardware and software, a broad base of users have been trained...we are committed towards making this national initiative beneficial for our communities. Delaying the service implementation will create organizational chaos and would be an extreme let down for the people of our region.

We are relying on your continued support for our rural communities. Please, don't delay! Move forward with your commitments to provide universal service, vital service, to the villages in rural Alaska.

Quyana

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Martin Leonard III", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Martin Leonard III
Coordinator, Distance Delivery Consortium



Lincoln Intermediate Unit No. 12

P.O. Box 70, New Oxford, PA 17350 717-624-4616

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CE 96-45

EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

To: The Honorable John McCain, Chair, Senate Commerce Committee
 Fr: Dr. George Zook Lincoln Intermediate Unit 12, *with [unclear]*
 Re: E-rate continuation
 Dt: June 11, 1998

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JUN 15 1998

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

The continuation of the e-rate program at the 2.25 billion dollar level is in the best interest of the learners and school district in the Lincoln Intermediate Unit 12 in South Central Pennsylvania. There should be no delays nor reductions. By expanding educational access and opportunity for all learners this will expand telecommunications access to all of our school districts.

The continuation of the e-rate at the 2.25 billion dollar level is in the economic interest of the United States. These interests require technological investment in our schools. Most of our classrooms are not yet connected to the Internet. If our federal officials mean what they say about American education being the best in the world, we have to give our young people the tool to be the best.

The e-rate program should not be suspended or reduced. This is not acceptable. Current need is fixed at \$ 2.25 billion and should remain at that level until such time as the need declines.

All of our local school district and the Lincoln Intermediate Unit 12 have invested incalculable amounts of time and energy into the E-rate process. We have worked with community organizations and local businesses to leverage resources, raise matching money and establish comprehensive technology plans. To pull the plug on these efforts would amount to a cruel trick and a slap in the face to our nation's young people.

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RESOLUTION

BUCHANAN COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD

MAY 18, 1998

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On motion by Mr. Joe Gary Street, seconded by Mr. Clifford Helton, and approved unanimously, Buchanan County School Board adopted the following Resolutions:

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

RESOLVED, that it is hereby declared to be necessary and it is necessary, in order for the Buchanan County School Board to fulfill its duties and obligations to the public and to the school children of Buchanan County, Virginia, in the classroom to operate and maintain the up-to-date technology programs, and to have the full funding for all the services and discounts offered under the E-Rate.

RESOLVED, that the E-Rate may provide not only the students but parents and the community access to the Internet and a wide range of telecommunication services and internal connections.

RESOLVED, the Telecommunications Act of 1996 calls for schools and libraries to receive discounted access -- known as the "E-Rate". We are charged with the business of educating children, help us, through the enforcement of the Act; and furthermore, more than 30,000 schools and libraries have submitted applications for the E-Rate discounts, they are counting on this money to get Internet services into the classroom and the library setting.

RESOLVED, the phone companies, which pay into the fund to provide the discounts, cry; however, they recoup those access rates and new revenue as a result of the E-Rate being implemented.

RESOLVED, take the necessary action now, connect the children and schools to the net, and support the E-Rate.



Chairman of Board

ATTEST:


Clerk of Board

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CC 96-45

EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

June 10, 1998

JUN 15 1998

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Dear Congressmen:

I hope that your actions will protect and preserve the E-rate.

1. Continuation of the e-rate at the current level is in the best interest of students, schools, and libraries. There should be no delays or reductions. By expanding educational access and opportunity for all students, particularly the "have nots" impacted by remote location and/or limited resources, universal service is a powerful equalizer paying dividends many times beyond the actual dollars collected.

2. Continuation of the e-rate at the current level is in the economic interest of the United States. These interests require this technological investment in our schools. Eighty-six percent of our classrooms are not connected to the Internet. If our federal officials mean what they say about American education being the best in the world, we have to give our young people the tool to be the best.

3. The program should not be suspended or reduced. Rumors out of Washington, D.C. suggest that the F.C.C. has been entertaining the possibility of scaling back the program to roughly \$650 million, far below the authorized level of \$2.25 billion. This is not acceptable. Current need is fixed at \$2.25 billion and should remain at that level until such time as the need declines.

4. Local schools and libraries have invested incalculable amounts of time and energy into the e-rate process. They have worked with community organizations and local businesses to leverage resources, raise matching money, and establish comprehensive technology plans. To pull the plug on these efforts would amount to a cruel trick and a slap in the face to our nation's young people.

Therefore, I urge you to protect and preserve the e-rate discount for our schools and libraries. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Dr. Janice Solkov
Administrative Services Manager
Upper Moreland School District
2900 Terwood Road
Willow Grove, PA 19090
(215) 830-1586
jis@umsd.k12.pa.us

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EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

TO: Commissioner Susan Ness
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

FROM: Jack H Adams, Director of Media
Arrowhead Area Education Agency
Box 1399
Fort Dodge, Iowa 50501

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JUN 15 1998

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

SUBJECT: E-rate

DATE: June 10, 1998

It is very important to the 31 school districts that I serve in Northwest Iowa to have the universal service continued at the current rate. Schools have spent alot of time in preparing for the universal service. The addition of the money to their technology service will help them prepare their students for the 21 st Century.

I hope you will find it possible to continual this support .

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Berks County Intermediate Unit
An Educational Service Agency

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JUN 15 1998

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

June 11, 1998

Commissioner Susan Ness
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Commissioner Ness:

I am writing to express my support of the continuation of the FCC e-rate program and its funding at the authorized level of \$2.25 billion. It has recently come to my attention that the e-rate discount program is in peril of being greatly reduced or eliminated entirely.

I strongly believe that any curtailment of this important program would not only severely affect the schools and libraries that are eligible to receive the discounts, but would also negatively impact our entire country economically. Our school students *must have* access to the information technologies necessary for them to take their places in the competitive arena of the global marketplace.

In addition, local schools and libraries have invested an enormous amount of time and effort in completing the steps necessary to apply for the telecommunications discounts. They have worked with community organizations and local businesses to leverage resources, raise matching funds, and establish comprehensive technology plans in order to participate in the e-rate program. It would be an enormous waste of precious local resources should the program be discontinued or curtailed at this time.

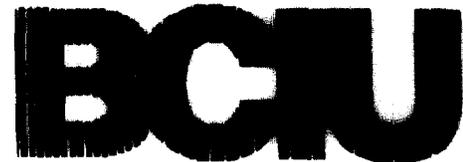
I request your assistance in supporting the e-rate program by insuring that it is funded at the authorized levels. On behalf of our local schools and libraries, I would greatly appreciate your consideration of this matter of great importance.

Sincerely,

Dr. K. Robert Hohl
Executive Director

ERH/EKP:dr

2



Berks County Intermediate Unit
An Educational Service Agency

1111 Commons Boulevard • P.O. Box 16050 • Reading, PA 19612-6050 • tele. 610.987.2248 • FAX 610.987.8400

FAX number (202) 418-2821	Group number
Contact person Commissioner Susan Ness	Date 6/12/98
Organization name Federal Communications Commission	
Address	
City, State, ZIP code Washington, D.C. 20554	

FROM	Individual's name K. Robert Hohl, Executive Director	Mail code	5
Subject	Support of E-Rate	Total number of pages	2

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JUN 15 1998

FAX TRANSMITTAL

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

TO: Commissioner Susan Ness
Federal Communications Commission

FAX: (202) 418-2821

FROM: Terry N. Lindquist, Ph.D.
Superintendent

The E-rate program being considered by Congress is critical to the school districts in our region. All 35 School districts plus 48 private schools in King and Pierce Counties in Washington State completed plans and applied for the E-rate.

Our region's schools have planned for and expected this funding to help them connect their classrooms to the Internet. The funding is essential for expanding access and opportunity for all students. Withdrawing the program at this point will seriously impede our schools' abilities to achieve educational reform and help students reach the higher standards they must achieve today.

Thank you for considering this information in your decision whether or not to support the nation's students, schools, and communities in this very important matter.

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EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

C.O.O.R. Intermediate School District

11051 North Cut Road
Roscommon, Michigan 48653

Phone: (517) 275-5137
Fax: (517) 275-5881

June 12, 1998

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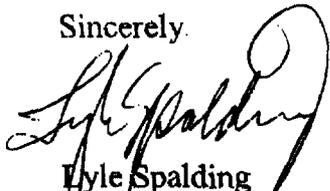
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Commissioner Susan Ness
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

The Intermediate School District that I represent covers 2,500 miles in rural Northern Michigan. This land mass is larger than the State of Delaware. We currently have 71% of our students who are eligible for free or reduced lunch. We have 11,000 students in this very large area. The universal services opportunity, that we spend a great deal of time with community organizations, local businesses and our six local school systems, has the potential to be a tremendous help to our rural schools. The purpose of this letter is to request that at least for the current year, you do not stop or amend the current legislation.

We feel the continuation of e-rate, at its current level, is at the best interest of our students' schools and libraries. We also feel that this program should be implemented on the timeline that was established in Washington. This expanding of education access and opportunity for all students really levels the playing field for our have-nots in rural Northern Michigan. Please consider this when you take up, in the near future, any amendment to the e-rate.

Sincerely,


Lyle Spalding
Superintendent

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An Equal Opportunity Program / Employer
Auxiliary aids, services and alternative format will be made available upon request to individuals with disabilities
Michigan Relay Center 1-800-649-3777 (Voice and TDD)

The C.O.O.R. Intermediate School District gives notice that it does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, age, height, weight, political belief, religious belief, marital status, or disability in the education programs and activities operated by the District, including employment. The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies: Dr. Donald Adams, Coordinator of Planning, Monitoring and Data Collection; and/or George Johnson, Director of Planning and Finance, 11051 N. Cut Rd., Roscommon, MI 48653 (517) 275-5137.

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CC9645

Dennis Szal
Principal
883-4730

Tony Meek
Assistant Principal
Curriculum
883-4730/883-4732

MAZAMA HIGH SCHOOL

3009 Summers Lane Klamath Falls, Oregon 97603

Jim Ferguson
Assistant Principal
Athletic Director
883-4735

Craig Angelich
Assistant Principal
Student Services
883-4733

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JUN 15 1998

6/11/98

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Dear Commissioner Susan Ness:

Please consider supporting the E-rate initiative. My understanding is that this legislation is currently in question and that these funds may not be available. These funds provide the opportunity to greatly enhance student accessibility to technology in our schools throughout the nation. Therefore, please consider the seriousness of the loss of these funds to our students and their futures.

Yours in Teaching and Learning,



Dennis M. Szal, Principal

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Klamath Falls City Schools

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Special Services Department
1336 Avalon Street
Klamath Falls, Oregon 97603
Phone (541) 883-4745 Fax (541) 883-4706

EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

FAX TRANSMISSION COVER SHEET

Date:

6-10-98

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To:

Susan Ness

JUN 15 1998

Fax:

202 - 418 - 2821

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Sender:

Leigh Ann Arthur
Director of Special Services

Subject:

We need the e-rate funds to
support our technology programs.

The advances in technology have made
a tremendous impact on our students
with disabilities. Don't cut our funding
possibilities - Support the E-RATE!

Confidentiality Notice

This facsimile transmission (and/or documents accompanying it) may contain confidential information belonging to the use of the individual or entity named above. If you are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any disclosure, copying, distribution or the taking of any action in reliance on the contents of this information is strictly prohibited. If you have received this transmission in error, please immediately notify us by telephone to arrange for return of the documents.

You should receive _____ page(s), including this cover sheet.

If you do not receive all the pages, please call (541) 883-4745

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Basin City
Connell
Eltopia
Mesa

NORTH FRANKLIN SCHOOL DISTRICT
P.O. BOX 829 1100 W. CLARK ST.
CONNELL, WASHINGTON 99326
(509) 234-2021

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EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

June 11, 1998

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Commissioner Susan Ness
Federal Communications Commission

Dear Commissioner Ness:

Two years ago Congress rewrote the law governing the telecommunications industry. The 1996 Telecommunications Act substantially deregulated long distance companies and other telecommunications sectors and gave telecommunications corporations the opportunity to pursue new lines of business and profits.

An Amendment to the Act called for a universal service fund to be paid by the corporations to support Internet access, wiring and discounts for schools and libraries as well as funding access for rural and other high cost areas. The maximum the entire industry was asked to invest in schools and libraries was \$2.25 billion per year – less than three percent of 1996 revenue in the long distance industry alone. Corporation profits are increasing as a result of deregulation and removing other costs.

The long distance carriers have waged a campaign against the E-Rate, calling it a tax and threatening to pass it on to consumers' phone bills. The telecommunications industry has mounted a public relations campaign to convince consumers that price increases are the equivalent of a tax, including a line item on phone bills often referred to as school tax.

Some members of Congress are raising objections to the program while others are standing firm. The Federal Communications Commission will soon be voting on the elimination of the E-Rate program or the cutting back of funds.

Our position is (1) that the FCC should not back down on the E-Rate, and (2) that full funding of the \$2.25 billion for schools and libraries should be maintained. The essential reasons for our position are as follows:

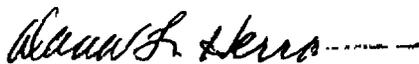
- Continuation of the E-Rate at the current level is essential to the educational interests of students, schools and libraries. By expanding educational access and opportunity

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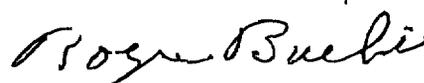
for all students, particularly the "have nots" impacted by remote location and/or limited resources, universal service is a powerful equalizer.

- Continuation of the E-rate at the current level is also in the economic interest of the United States. These interests require technological investment in our schools.
- Eighty-six percent of our classrooms are not connected to the Internet. Some 291 of 296 Washington districts have completed plans and made applications for the E-Rate. The E-Rate program is essential for the implementation of educational reform in Washington.
- The program must not be suspended or reduced. Scaling back the program for below the authorized level is not acceptable. Current need is fixed at \$2.25 billion and should remain at that level until such time as the need declines.
- At North Franklin School District the success of a recent technology grant and a model remote virtual classroom is in jeopardy.

Sincerely,



Dana Herron
School Board Director
Legislative Representative



Roger Bailie
School Board Director

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GATES LIBRARY FOUNDATION

CC 96-45

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

June 11, 1998

Commissioner Susan Ness
1919 M Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Commissioner Ness,

The Gates Library Foundation was founded in June 1997 by Bill and Melinda Gates to provide expanded access to digital information and the Internet to public libraries serving the nation's neediest communities.

Over the past year the Foundation has installed computer hardware and enabled Internet connectivity in over 1,000 public library buildings. Our goal is to reach 10,000 U.S. libraries by the Year 2000. Our guidelines give priority to libraries serving our poorest citizens. Consequently these people will be denied access to the Internet if their libraries cannot provide this access.

It has been our experience that over 50% of the libraries we have worked with to date have applied for and are expecting to have telecommunications discounts on their monthly Internet access fees provided by the Universal Service Fund. We are very concerned that these libraries, struggling under tight operating budgets, will not be able to provide Internet access without these discounts.

We respectfully request that you make every effort to continue this vitally important program. Please call my office if you are interested in examples of how this affects specific libraries serving low-income communities.

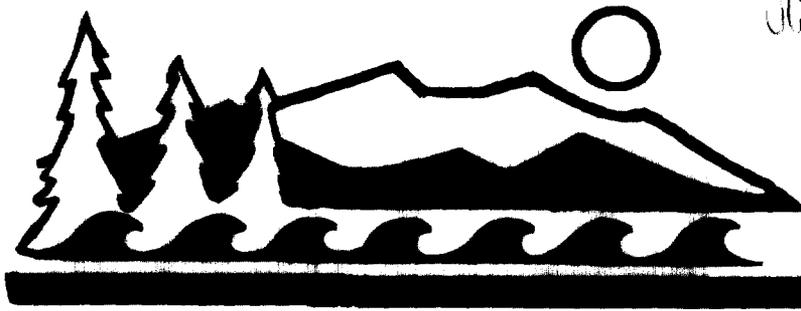
Sincerely,



Patty Stonesifer
President and Chairman of the Board

cc: Members of the Senate
Federal Communications Commission
House Commerce Committee

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SELKIRK

CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOX 129
METALINE FALLS, WA 99153
(509) 446-2951

June 9, 1998

CC 96-45

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Commissioner Susan Ness
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M. Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Commissioner Ness:

I am writing to urge you to protect the e-rate for students, schools and libraries. The Selkirk School District is representative of a rural and remote community school district with limited opportunities for Internet access without e-rate.

Continuation of the e-rate at the current level is in the best interest of the students, school and libraries. By expanding educational access and opportunity for all students, particularly those who do not have access and are impacted by remote location and/or limited resources, universal service is a powerful equalizer which will pay dividends many times beyond the actual dollars collected. It will equalize educational opportunities for all students.

Another reason for continuation of the e-rate at the current level is the economic interest of the United States. These interests require technological investment in our schools. Currently, eighty-six percent of our classrooms are not connected to the Internet. If our federal officials mean what they say about American education being the best in the world, we have to give our young people the tool to be the best. Without e-rate, exorbitant communication costs prohibit students the necessary access to Internet and other electronic educational devices.

Nor should the e-rate program be suspended or reduced. Current budgetary needs are fixed at \$2.25 billion and should remain at that level until such time as the need declines. Local schools and libraries have invested incalculable amounts of time and energy into the e-rate process. They have worked with community organizations and local business to leverage resources, raise matching money and establish comprehensive technology plans.

When voting on e-rate issues, please consider our Nation's young people and the positive impact this universal access would have on their education.

Sincerely,

Kim L. Carlson
Superintendent

KLC/ki

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Commissioner Susan Ness
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N. W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Dear Commissioner Ness:

Help Us Preserve E-Rate! I represent a regional education service center which includes 27 school districts in western New York State. Our districts are rural and, in many cases, very small. Telecommunications are a necessity, but are very expensive. The 1996 Telecommunications Act has provided the incentive and encouragement we have needed in order to help our students receive the same opportunities as our urban and more affluent districts.

The majority of our classrooms are not connected to the Internet. We are usually listed in the "have not" column when it comes to telecommunications. We urge you to protect and preserve e-rate as it was originally conceived. Our districts, their personnel and the Boards of Education have spent countless hours in planning for the implementation of advanced (in some cases, basic) telecommunications and we are extremely disappointed to hear that the universal service e-rate may be reduced or suspended.

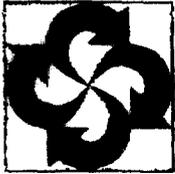
Please act in the interests of our nation's children and preserve funding for universal service.

Sincerely yours,

Penny Lester, Manager
Instructional Technology Support Services Division

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ERIE 2 - CHAUTAUKUA - CATTARAUGUS BOCES
Instructional Technology Support Services Division
LoGuidice Educational Center
9520 Fredonia-Stockton Road
Fredonia, New York 14063-9698
716/672-4371
Toll Free (800) 344-9611
FAX 716/672-2393



WAYNE-FINGER LAKES
Board of
Cooperative
Educational
Services

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Administrative Office
Eisenhower Building
131 Drumlín Court
Newark NY 14513-1863
(315) 332-7284
FAX (315) 332-7425

Joseph J. Marinelli, Ph.D.
District Superintendent

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June 9, 1998

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Susan Ness, Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Commissioner Ness:

I am writing this letter requesting your immediate attention to the recent attack on the universal service e-rate. BOCES recently submitted, on behalf of 40 school districts, the appropriate information involved in our request for assistance with our school districts for over \$1.5 million on next year's investment in telecommunications. The purpose of this investment is to be able to further the educational quality and opportunity available to our students in what is a largely rural area. It seems that the original purpose that the universal service was created for, to benefit students, schools and libraries, is being lost.

At the current time, the FCC is setting a vote in June on issues related to universal service funding. I would greatly encourage and request that you fight any change or dilution of the universal service that was originally passed through Congress. In particular, I would make the following points:

- 1) Continuation of the e-rate at the current level is in the best interest of students, schools and libraries. By expanding educational access and opportunity for all students, particularly the "have nots" impacted by remote location and/or limited resources, universal service is a powerful equalizer.
- 2) Continuation of the e-rate at the current level is in the economic interest of the United States. These interests require technological investment in our schools. Eighty-six percent of our classrooms are not connected to the Internet. If our federal officials mean what they say about American education being the best in the world, we have to give our young people the tools to be the best.
- 3) The program should not be suspended or reduced. Rumors out of D.C. this week suggest that the FCC has been entertaining the possibility of scaling back the program to roughly \$650 million, far below the authorized level of \$2.25 billion. This is not acceptable. Current need is fixed at \$2.25 billion and should remain at that level until such time as the need declines.
- 4) Local schools and libraries have invested incalculable amounts of time and energy into the e-rate process. (We have already spent \$4,000 in personnel and consultant time preparing and submitting our application through the first two phases.) They have worked with community organizations and local businesses to leverage resources, raise matching money and establish comprehensive technology plans. To pull the plug on these efforts would amount to a cruel trick and a slap in the face to our nation's young people.

Your immediate attention to this matter would be greatly appreciated. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at (315) 332-7200.

Sincerely,

Joseph J. Marinelli
District Superintendent

JJM/lad



**HEART OF GEORGIA
REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICE AGENCY**

P.O. BOX 368 • HIGHWAY 23 NORTH • EASTMAN, GA 31023 • (912) 374-2240 • FAX: (912) 374-1524

JUNE D. BRADFELD, Ed.S., Executive Director

June 11, 1998

cc 96-45
EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

The Honorable Susan Ness
Commissioner, Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

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JUN 15 1998

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Dear Commissioner Ness:

Continuation of the e-rate at the current level is in the best interest of students, schools, and libraries. There should be no delays or reductions. By expanding educational access and opportunity for all students, particularly the "have nots" impacted by remote location and/or limited resources, universal service is a powerful equalizer paying dividends many times beyond the actual dollars collected.

Continuation of the e-rate at the current level is in the economic interest of the United States. These interests require technological investment in our schools. Eighty-six percent of our classrooms are not connected to the Internet. If our federal officials mean what they say about American education being the best in the world, we have to give our young people the tool to be the best.

The program should not be suspended or reduced. Rumors out of D.C. suggest that the FCC has been entertaining the possibility of scaling back the program to roughly \$650 million, far below the authorized level of \$2.25 billion. This is not acceptable. Current need is fixed at \$2.25 billion and should remain at that level until such time as the need declines.

Local schools and libraries have invested incalculable amounts of time and energy into the e-rate process. They have worked with community organizations and local businesses to leverage resources, raise matching money, and establish comprehensive technology plans. To pull the plug on these efforts would amount to a cruel trick and a slap in the face to our nation's young people.

Please help us.

Sincerely,

June D. Bradfield

JDB:sc

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Center for Educational Priorities

72025 Hill Road • Covelo, California 95428 • Phone/Fax: 707.983.8374

EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

June 11, 1998

Commissioner Susan Ness
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street NW
Washington, DC 20554

RECEIVED

JUN 15 1998

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

RE: Save the E-Rate

Dear Ms. Ness:

The concept of "universal service" has been the single most important public interest obligation of the telecommunications industry. Since the Communications Act of 1934, the basic contract between telecommunications companies and the public has been their obligation to serve the "public interest, convenience, and necessity." In exchange the industry has been given considerable license to and control over nearly all aspects of our private and public communications.

The recent ploy by some major telephone companies to transfer their obligation to their customers must be resisted at all cost to preserve the priority rights of the American public.

We urge you to maintain the universal service program and specifically the education rate for telecommunications services in our local schools and libraries and to serve the public's interest above the private interests of the industry.

Sincerely,



Brian Burke, Director

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CC 96-45

Elliott County Board of Education

EUGENE S. BINION, Superintendent

SANDY HOOK, KENTUCKY 41171

PHONE 606-738-5117

FAX 606-738-4646

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PATRICIA HOWARD, Chairperson
EDITH DICKERSON, Vice-Chairman
DONNIE BARKER, Board Member
JOE SALYERS, Board Member
DENISE BLACK, Board Member

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JUN 15 1998

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

June 12, 1998

The Honorable Susan Ness
Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Commissioner Susan Ness:

Please Consider support for continuation of the e-rate at the current level which I believe is in the best interest of students, schools and libraries; especially those located in economically depressed rural areas.

There should be no delays or reductions in this program which means so much to students, particularly the "have nots" impacted by remote location and/or limited resources. I believe universal services is a powerful equalizer paying dividends many times beyond the actual dollars collected.

Continuation of the e-rate at the current level is also in the economic interest of the united states. These interests require technological investment in our schools. Presently eighty-six per cent of the nations classrooms are not connected to the Internet.

This program should not be suspended or reduced and it should remain at the current need of \$2.25 billion until such time as the need declines.

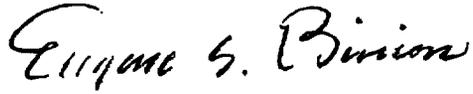
Local schools and libraries have invested incalculable amounts of time and energy into the e-rate process. They have worked with community organizations and local businesses to leverage resources, raise money and establish comprehensive technology plans. To pull the plug on these efforts would amount to a cruel trick and a slap in the face to our nation's young people.

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2

I urge you again to support continuation of this deserving program at the current level.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Eugene S. Binion". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Eugene S. Binion, Superintendent
Elliott County Schools

ESB/sg

**GRAND COULEE DAM
SCHOOL DISTRICT 301J**

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EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

110 Stevens Street
Coulee Dam, Washington 99116
(509) 633-2143
SCAN 565-1494
FAX (509) 633-2530

June 8, 1998

Commissioner Susan Ness
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

FAX: (202) 418-2821

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JUN 15 1998

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Dear Commissioner Ness:

Please carefully consider the impact of rescinding the E-rate program for school districts who are so rural and remote such as we are here at Grand Coulee Dam. Our tax base is only 25% of the State of Washington average. We most sincerely urge your continued support of the E-rate program:

1. Continuation of the e-rate at the current level is in the best interest of students, schools and libraries. There should be no delays or reductions. By expanding educational access and opportunity for all students, particularly the "have nots" impacted by remote location and/or limited resources, universal service is a powerful equalizer paying dividends many times beyond the actual dollars collected.
2. Continuation of the e-rate at the current level is in the economic interest of the United States. These interests require technological investment in our schools. Eighty-six percent of our classrooms are not connected to the internet. If our federal officials mean what they say about American education being the best in the world, we have to give our young people the tool to be the best.
3. The program should not be suspend or reduced. Rumors out of D.C. suggest that the FCC has been entertaining the possibility of scaling back the program to roughly \$650 million, far below the authorized level of \$2.25 billion. This is not acceptable. Current need is fixed at \$2.25 billion and should remain at that level until such time as the need declines.
4. Local schools and libraries have invested incalculable amounts of time and energy into the e-rate process. They have worked with community organizations and local businesses to leverage resources, raise matching money and establish comprehensive technology plans. To pull the plug on these efforts would amount to a cruel trick and a slap in the face to our nation's young people.

Our students deserve an equitable education. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Leon R. Johnson
Leon R. Johnson
Special Programs Administrator

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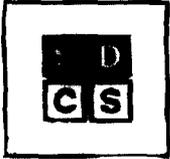
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FAX NO. 6192974942

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**BOARD OF EDUCATION
SAN DIEGO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**

EDUCATION CENTER • 4100 Normal Street, San Diego, CA 92103-2682 •

(619) 293-8662/3029
Fax (619) 297-5624

RON OTTINGER
President

June 9, 1998

CC 96-45

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JUN 15 1998

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

The Honorable Susan Ness
Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Commissioner Ness:

This letter is to express my disapproval of the current rhetoric being used by some members of Congress to describe the "E-Rate" telecommunications discount program. The discounts that this program would provide for schools and libraries would greatly benefit not schools or school districts, but the students who need direct access to the resources these services provide. Making radical modifications to the discount program at this late date would be harmful to students in the district. Schools and libraries were added to the Universal Service Fund during the Telecommunications Act of 1996. The Act had broad congressional support and the development of FCC "E-Rate" discount procedures has been the subject of a multitude of public input.

The San Diego Unified School District has followed the procedures closely and because of the potential to bring advanced telecommunications services to the students in the district, we have responsibly applied for discounts on a number of eligible services from strictly telecommunication services to cabling. Discounts provided to the district would allow students to have direct access to the same tools that the business community uses on a daily basis.

Without the full and immediate funding of "E-Rate" discounts, the investment in technology necessary to prepare our students for the future may not be possible. I respectfully urge you to express your support for the full funding of the "E-Rate" program to your colleagues and the FCC commissioners to help ensure that this important opportunity is not wasted.

Sincerely

Ron Ottinger
President
Board of Education

c: The Honorable John McCain, (R-AZ)
The Honorable Ernest F. Hollings, (D-SC)

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