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CC 96-45

INTERMEDIATE UNIT I
Fayette-Greene-Washington

ONE INTERMEDIATE UNIT DRIVE
COAL CENTER PA 15483-9042
TELEPHONE 412-638-3241
FAX 412-638-6722



EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

SAMUEL J. CRAIGHEAD
Executive Director

June 10, 1998

Commissioner Susan Ness
Federal Communications Commission
Facsimile Number: 202-418-2821

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JUN 15 1998

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Dear Commissioner Ness,

I would like to encourage you to vote for the full funding of the e-rate. Throughout the last year, my work at I.U. I placed a very high priority with getting our school districts discounted through the e-rate.

Intermediate Unit I serves the school districts of Fayette, Greene and Washington counties in Southwestern PA. Our students come from small, rural, and predominantly poor school districts. Without the help of the universal discounts, it may be years before our students have access to the more advanced information and communication technologies.

We believe that 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 tools to be the best.

The program should not be suspended or reduced. We have heard 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. The higher level should remain until such time as the need declines.

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June 10, 1998
Page 2

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.

We urge your support for the current e-rate structure and allocation. It is in the best interest of America's children.

Sincerely yours,



Samuel J. Craighead
Executive Director

SJC/kv

TEKOA SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 265 ♦ Pre-K through 12th Grade

DIRECTORS

Calvin Chase
President

Jill Faunce
Director

John Giudice
Director

Gary Heaton
Director

Susan Seelye
Vice President

ADMINISTRATION

Dr. Mary S. Hall
Superintendent
Elementary Principal

Wayne Roellich
High School Principal
Athletic Director

Joy Puckett
Business Manager

202 - 418 - 2821

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CC 96-48

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JUN 15 1998

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

June 9, 1998

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

Dear Commissioner Ness:

I am writing this letter of support for the continuation of the universal e-rate. I am the school superintendent of the Tekoa School District which is located in a remote farming community in Washington state. Remoteness and distance to services are barriers to accessing those services.

Rural communities in our area have experienced a significant decrease in our rural families do to welfare reform. When our families leave for the cities, our schools experience a drop in student enrollment. This lack of enrollment has an adverse impact on our budget. Fewer dollars has created a financial barrier to services. Our community was counting on the e-rate to help us overcome some of these barriers.

Several points need to be made in defense of the universal e-rate:

1. Continuation of the e-rate at the current level is in the best interest of students, schools, and libraries, especially those of us in rural communities. 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 investments 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 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 need declines.

Thank your for your consideration to this issue.

Sincerely,



Mary S. Hall
Superintendent

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List A B C D E

P.O. Box 869, 135 North College Avenue, Tekoa, Washington 99033-0869
(509)284-3281 ● (509)456-2460 ● FAX (509)284-2045

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CC 96-48

Gogebic-Ontonagon Intermediate School District

BOARD OF EDUCATION

James S. Fyfe
Dennis J. Morin
John D. Valesano
Bruce M. Kerkove

P.O. Box 218
Bergland, Michigan 49910

Phone: (906) 575-3438
Fax: (906) 575-3373

BOARD OF EDUCATION

James R. Mikhren
Edwin E. Marthson
Thomas F. Hendrickson
Graydon E. Blank, Supt.

June 10, 1998

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JUN 15 1998

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 express my support for the continuation of the Universal Service Fund and e rate at the current level of funding. The Universal Service Fund will allow our small rural school districts of the Western Upper Peninsula of Michigan to offer the same technological advantages of the rich suburban districts in lower Michigan and the rest of the country.

We are presently experiencing approximately 10% unemployment in our region, unlike the very low unemployment figures in the rest of the state, region, and nation. Consequently, the constituents of our school districts are unable to afford building issues and bond issues to meet our student's technological needs. Our schools have from 50% to 80% low income students. We need your help in this manner.

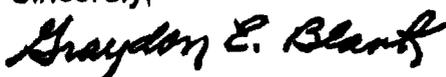
If we wish all of our areas of the USA to be able to offer a truly competitive and outstanding education as a goal for the year 2000, we in Rural America need the advantages which the Universal Service Fund will provide.

The e rate should be funded at the present level of funding i.e. \$2.25 billion and stay at a level until the school's needs are met.

School districts in all over the country have put a great deal of time and effort into this program. Hope has been raised for many rural administrators, teachers, and especially students.

Do not take that hope away, by bowing to large interest groups that do not have the best interest of students and the country at heart as do you.

Sincerely,



Graydon E. Blank, Superintendent
Gogebic-Ontonagon Intermediate School District
Bergland, Michigan 49910

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CC 96-45

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA

BOARD OF EDUCATION

21ST STREET S. OF THE PARKWAY

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19103-1099

EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

**OFFICE OF THE CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER
ROOM 202**

**TELEPHONE (215) 299-7802
FAX (215) 299-3508**

June 9, 1998

RECEIVED

JUN 15 1998

**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:

As Chief Information Officer for the School District of Philadelphia, I am writing to help you understand the detrimental impact that delays or further cuts in the E-rate program would have on the students in my district.

Because of the substantial level of poverty in the district, the School District of Philadelphia qualified for an 86 percent discount under the Federal Communications Commission's E-rate regulations. We regarded this as a unique opportunity to improve the telecommunications infrastructure of the district's schools and to provide our largely minority student population with learning opportunities equivalent to their suburban neighbors. We undertook careful planning to wire the district gradually over several years, to make sure that we had all the necessary resources in place.

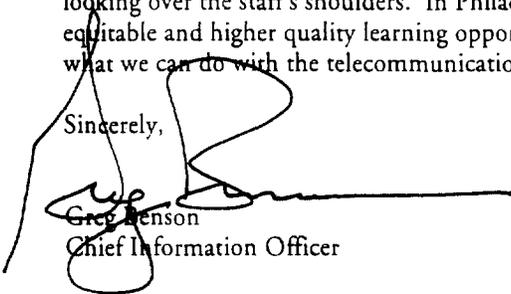
When our planning was complete, the district submitted applications for approximately \$16 million in E-rate support for calendar 1998, most of it to build networks in our schools that will enable the delivery of advanced telecommunications services in support of instruction and enhanced student skills for 21st century jobs. We spent a great deal of time and effort preparing our applications, and took particular note of the Schools and Libraries Corporation's list of eligible and ineligible services. Our request is strictly for telecommunications services, Internet access and the eligible portion of internal connections, not the carpeting or construction work that uninformed critics have alleged school districts are seeking.

Those same critics indicate that 70 to 80 percent of American schools are "wired". That is true only if "wired" means that the school principal can dial into the Internet. However, if the commission supports the goal of networking the classrooms where learning really takes place, the "have-not" schools of America must have the help of the E-rate to get the job done. With the E-rate, we will be able to build networks to serve all of the classrooms in one-third of our schools this year. Without it, we will have money only to wire one classroom and certain administrative offices in those schools.

We know that many schools in America have delayed their technological development for a year to wait for the E-rate opportunity and thus make the best use of local taxpayers' money. Please don't set us back another year by further delays or cutbacks in the program, especially now, when we are about to start our summer network implementation schedule.

The FCC and the SLC have gone to great lengths to put in place a program with careful reviews and auditors already looking over the staff's shoulders. In Philadelphia, the E-rate can make a substantial contribution to creating more equitable and higher quality learning opportunities for our impoverished children. Please give us the chance to show what we can do with the telecommunications and learning technologies in our schools.

Sincerely,


Greg Benson
Chief Information Officer

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CC 96-48

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA

BOARD OF EDUCATION

21ST STREET S. OF THE PARKWAY

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19103-1099

EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

DAVID W. HORNBECK
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

TELEPHONE (215) 269-7823
FAX (215) 269-4687

June 9, 1998

RECEIVED

JUN 15 1998

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

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

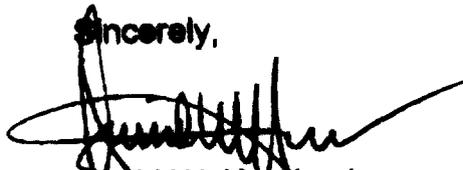
Dear Commissioner:

On behalf of the School District of Philadelphia and its 213,000 students, I am writing to urge your assistance in maintaining the e-rate at its current authorized level.

Our school system has invested a great deal of time and energy in the e-rate application process. We have worked with community organizations and local business leaders to leverage the resources that will make it possible for our students to gain access to the same technology and educational opportunities that their counterparts in wealthier school districts now enjoy. The resources provided by the e-rate will enable us to connect our classrooms to an extent that will be impossible if the rate is scaled back as dramatically as has been proposed in some quarters.

I appreciate your consideration. Please feel free to contact me if I can provide you with further information on our School District's dependence on the e-rate.

Sincerely,



David W. Hornbeck

DWH/we

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CC 96-40



PORTSMOUTH SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

29 MIDDLE ROAD
PORTSMOUTH, RHODE ISLAND 02871

(401) 883-1039

EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

MARIO A. MANCIERI
Superintendent of Schools

ALBERT E. HONNEN, JR.
Assistant Superintendent of Schools

June 10, 1998

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JUN 15 1998

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

The Honorable Susan Ness
VIA FACSIMILE
202-418-2821

Dear Honorable Ness:

We as Americans have entered the Information Age, we must assure that the opportunities inherent in having access to the internet are extended to all Americans. Our students must be proficient in internet research and information gathering and evaluation of data if they are to be productive in our information age.

Some have suggested that the Federal Communications Commission should terminate the e-rate or take steps that would seriously jeopardize its viability. We strongly disagree. Proceeding with the e-rate will widen the circle of opportunity. Communities all over our nation have been diligently working to develop technology plans and pulling resources together so that our educational system can move into the 21st Century. The education of our youth dictates the tomorrow of our society. Please do not shortchange our educational system.

To claim that America cannot afford to make this investment is absurd. The costs of the e-rate have been more than offset by other actions that the FCC has taken to reduce long-distance phone rates.

Schools and libraries all over America have worked hard to prepare for the opportunity that the e-rate can create. We have invested hundreds of hours in attending meetings on e-rate and filling out applications for funding. We have spent hundreds of man hours in planning our curriculum with the vision and promise of internet access in all of our

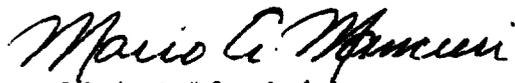
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Page 2
The Honorable Susan Ness

classrooms. To turn our back on the hopes and dreams of children and communities all over America would be unconscionable. We urge you and the FCC Commissioners to strongly support the e-rate.

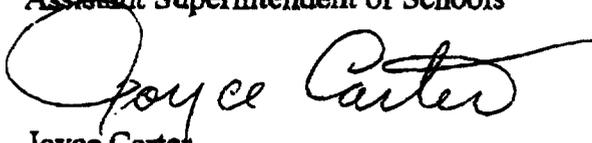
Sincerely,



Mario A. Mancieri
Superintendent of Schools



Michael W. Mello
Assistant Superintendent of Schools



Joyce Carter
Microcomputer Supervisor

cc: The Honorable William E. Kennard
The Honorable Harold W. Furchtgott-Roth
The Honorable Michael K. Powell
The Honorable Gloria Tristani
The Honorable John Chaffee

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EX PARTE OR LATE FILED



STATE OF ALASKA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
WASHINGTON, D.C.

TONY KNOWLES
GOVERNOR

June 8, 1998

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JUN 15 1998

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

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Dear Commissioner Ness:

We are very distressed to learn that the FCC may be considering a proposal to halt further distribution of universal service funds for schools and libraries.

Our previous pleadings to the FCC have emphasized that universal service is a critically important national and nation-building policy. Section 254 of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended by the Telecommunications Act of 1996, was enacted to increase the availability and affordability of telecommunications services to *all* Americans, including those in rural and high cost areas, and to America's schools, libraries and rural health care providers.

Federal universal service support is especially critical for low-population, low-density states such as Alaska. In remote and high cost areas, telecommunications are the lifeline connecting communities to larger population centers and to the Nation as a whole.

Universal service support for schools and libraries is also essential if Alaska and other remote and high cost areas are to join the rest of the Nation in the Information Age. Given the remoteness, harsh terrain, difficult climate, and widely-dispersed population in Alaska, Alaskans must rely to a greater extent than most Americans on telecommunications both to educate their children and to continue to develop their own job-related skills. Schools and libraries, particularly in rural areas, must have affordable access to the Internet so that Alaskans can have the same access to information to information sources as other Americans.

The United States has a shortage of Information Technology workers. A recent Department of Commerce report estimated that we will need nearly 2 million highly skilled technology workers over the next several years. In fact, Congress is extending visas for aliens because of the employee shortages in this field. In order to grow

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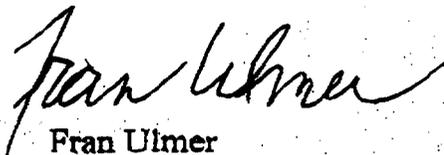
competitively and meet the needs of this industry, we must do everything possible to equip our schools and enable our students to prepare for the world of work. It is essential that we meet this challenge and provide our children with the tools to compete in the global marketplace.

For the reasons discussed above, we strongly urge the Commission not halt distribution of funds for schools and libraries. Instead, we urge the Commission to strike a balance between the needs of rural and high cost areas and the compelling concerns of schools, libraries, and rural health care providers. We believe that such a balance can be accomplished and would clearly be in the public interest.

For your information, it is our understanding that the National Governors' Association (NGA) will be writing you to express similar concerns. Alaska has been very active in the NGA's deliberations on this subject.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Sincerely,



Fran Ulmer
Lieutenant Governor

cc: Senator Ted Stevens
Senator Frank Murkowski
Congressman Don Young

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CC 96-45
SELKIRKCONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOX 129
METALINE FALLS, WA 99153
(509) 446-2951

EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

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JUN 15 1998

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

June 9, 1998

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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THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA

BOARD OF EDUCATION

**21ST STREET S. OF THE PARKWAY
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19103-1099**

EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

**DAVID W. HORNBECK
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

TELEPHONE (215) 269-7633
FAX (215) 269-4687

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June 9, 1998

JUN 15 1998

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

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

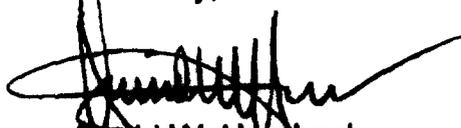
Dear Commissioner:

On behalf of the School District of Philadelphia and its 213,000 students, I am writing to urge your assistance in maintaining the e-rate at its current authorized level.

Our school system has invested a great deal of time and energy in the e-rate application process. We have worked with community organizations and local business leaders to leverage the resources that will make it possible for our students to gain access to the same technology and educational opportunities that their counterparts in wealthier school districts now enjoy. The resources provided by the e-rate will enable us to connect our classrooms to an extent that will be impossible if the rate is scaled back as dramatically as has been proposed in some quarters.

I appreciate your consideration. Please feel free to contact me if I can provide you with further information on our School District's dependence on the e-rate.

Sincerely,



David W. Hornbeck

DWH/we

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**SOLANO COUNTY
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**



655 Washington Street Fairfield, CA 94533-6399 707/421-6530 FAX 707/429-0480
June 9, 1998

The Honorable William E. Kennard, Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20554

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JUN 15 1998

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

MARK LIEB, Director
Business and Educational Services
TEL: 707/421-6541
FAX: 707/426-3621
E-mail: markl@solanococ.k12.ca.us

CC96-45

EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

Subject: E-Rate Support

I am writing in support of preserving E-rate. My issues are the following:

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 suspended or reduced. Rumors out of DC 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.

Thank you for your support

Sincerely,

Mark Lieb
Director, Business & Educational Services

cc: Commissioner Susan Ness
Harold Furchtgott-Roth
Michael Powell
Gloria Tristani

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER
SOLANO COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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CC 96-45

Capitol Region Education Council

Division of Technology Services

June 10, 1998

The Honorable William E. Kennard
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW
Washington, DC 20554

RECEIVED

JUN 15 1998

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

111 Charter Oak Avenue
Hartford, Connecticut 06106
(860) 824-4053
Fax (860) 247-1949
Internet: gduproy@crec.org
Web site: http://www.crec.org/

To the Honorable William E. Kennard:

I am writing in regards to the universal e-rate service and issuing my concern for the defense of this service. I am aware that debate is currently underway pertaining to the preservation of the e-rate service, and I would therefore urge you to protect and preserve the e-rate. The following is a summary of the benefits produced by the universal service:

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.
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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.

I hope that your decision is one of support for this issue. It is critical to the future of our nation and to future generations that we and our children are properly educated for the competitive world.

Sincerely,

Gary Duproy
Director of Technology Services

GD/ks

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CC 96-48

Capitol Region Education Council

Chief Financial Officer

June 10, 1998

The Honorable William E. Kennard
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW
Washington, DC 20554

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JUN 15 1998

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

111 Charter Oak Avenue
Hartford, Connecticut 06106
(800) 524-4066
Fax (800) 247-1949
Internet: gsynodi@crec.org
Web site: <http://www.crec.org>

To the Honorable William E. Kennard:

I am writing in regards to the universal e-rate service and issuing my concern for the defense of this service. I am aware that debate is currently underway pertaining to the preservation of the e-rate service, and I would therefore urge you to protect and preserve the e-rate. The following is a summary of the benefits produced by the universal service:

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I hope that your decision is one of support for this issue. It is critical to the future of our nation and to future generations that we and our children are properly educated for the competitive world.

Sincerely,

George Synodi
Chief Financial Officer

GS/ks

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CC96-45

Capitol Region Education Council

Division of Staff
Development Services

June 10, 1998

The Honorable William E. Kennard
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW
Washington, DC 20554

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JUN 15 1998

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

111 Charter Oak Avenue
Hartford, Connecticut 06106
(860) 524-4053
Fax: (860) 246-3304
Internet: mpotish@crec.org
Website: http://www.crec.org/

To the Honorable William E. Kennard:

I am writing in regards to the universal e-rate service and issuing my concern for the defense of this service. I am aware that debate is currently underway pertaining to the preservation of the e-rate service, and I would therefore urge you to protect and preserve the e-rate. The following is a summary of the benefits produced by the universal service:

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 tools to be the best.
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I hope that your decision is one of support for this issue. It is critical to the future of our nation and to future generations that we and our children are properly educated for the competitive world.

Sincerely,

Marc Potish
Director of Staff Development Services

MP/ks

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DUCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

CC 96-45

Watersmeet Township School District

N4720 Hwy 45, P.O. Box 217
Watersmeet, MI 49969
Phone: 906/358-4504
Fax: 906/358-4713

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JUN 15 1998

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

June 9, 1998

The Honorable William E. Kennard
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Honorable Kennard,

As the Superintendent of a small (200 students, K-12) rural school district, I am extremely concerned about the recent action in Congress concerning the FCC E-rates for schools and libraries. 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.

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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.

Sincerely,

Debra L. Zelinski

Debra L. Zelinski
Superintendent

CC: Commissioner Susan Ness
Harold Furchtgott-Roth

Michael Powell
Gloria Tristani

Post-It™ Fax Note 7671		Date 6/9/98	# of pages 1
To Commissioner Susan Ness	From Debra Zelinski		
Co./Dept.	Co. Watersmeet School		
Phone #	Phone # 906/358-4504		
Fax # 906/418-2821	Fax # 906/358-4713		

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June 12, 1998

Chairman William E. Kennard
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW
Washington, DC 20554

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

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Dear Chairman Kennard:

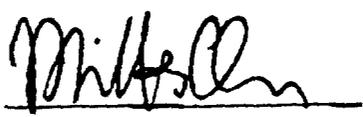
We write today, as representatives of the technology industry and organizations concerned with the future of schools and telecommunications to urge you to support the implementation of the E-Rate program. If the E-Rate program is halted, or severely crippled through cuts in funding, it is this country's children who will suffer.

Schools and libraries across the country have spent the last year preparing for rollout of the E-Rate. They have worked hard to develop multi-year technology plans, taken the time to thoroughly fill out detailed application forms, and worked closely with vendors to develop appropriate purchasing strategies to bring technology into their communities. Halting the program will put schools and libraries even further behind in their efforts to deploy technology.

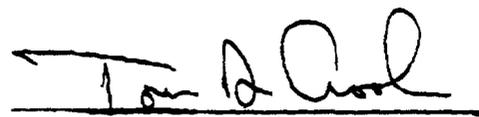
This program is a critical first step toward the implementation and integration of technology into all of America's classrooms and libraries. But without this critical first step, there is no guarantee that as a country we will be able to get where we need to be. The E-Rate is a positive first step toward training the workforce for the next millenium. Without a properly trained workforce, U.S. companies may ultimately be forced to go elsewhere to find the skilled labor they need to make their products and service customers.

There are currently 30,000 applicants waiting for notification for funding year 1998 who represent well over 100,000 schools and libraries across the country. We cannot afford to put our nation's children on technological hold. We urge you to develop a strategy that ensures that the program is not halted and that all valid applications receive full funding.

Thank you for your support.



Milton Chen, Ph.D.
Executive Director
The George Lucas Educational Foundation



Tom D. Crook
CEO
American School Directory

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Ernest Fleishman
Senior Vice President
Scholastic, Inc.



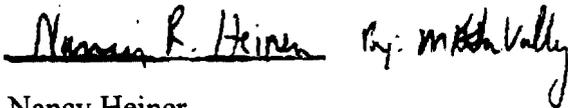
Jay Bryant
Information Architect
KOZ



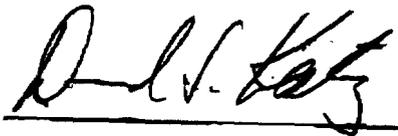
Elliot F. Gerson
CEO
ETC, Inc.



Thomas W. Greaves
President and CEO
NetSchools Corporation



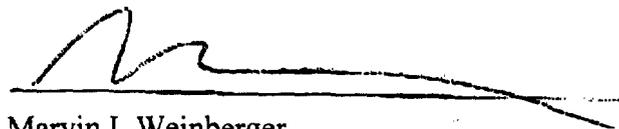
Nancy Heiner
General Counsel
Apple Computer, Inc.



David Katz
Director, Global Education Markets
3Com Corporation



John T. Kernan
Chairman and CEO
The Lightspan Partnership, Inc.



Marvin I. Weinberger
Chairman and CEO
Infonautics, Corp.

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Capitol Region Education Council

Division of Technology Services

June 10, 1998

111 Charter Oak Avenue
Hartford, Connecticut 06106
(800) 524-4053
Fax (800) 247-1949
Internet: gduprey@crec.org
Web site: http://www.crec.org

The Honorable William E. Kennard
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW
Washington, DC 20554

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JUN 15 1998

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

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I hope that your decision is one of support for this issue. It is critical to the future of our nation and to future generations that we and our children are properly educated for the competitive world.

Sincerely,

Laura Baldino

Laura Baldino
Education/Technology Specialist

LB/ks

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Capitol Region Education Council

Division of Technology Services

June 10, 1998

The Honorable William E. Kennard
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW
Washington, DC 20554

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111 Charter Oak Avenue
Hartford, Connecticut 06106
(800) 524-4063
Fax (800) 247-1949
Internet: gduprey@crec.org
Web site: http://www.crec.org/

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

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Sincerely,

Michael Kusiak

Michael Kusiak
Senior Systems Analyst

MK/ks

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Capitol Region Education Council

Chief Financial Officer

June 10, 1998

The Honorable William E. Kennard
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW
Washington, DC 20554

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JUN 15 1998

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

111 Charter Oak Avenue
Hartford, Connecticut 06101
(800) 524-4081
Fax (860) 247-1941
Internet: gsynodi@crec.org
Web site: http://www.crec.org

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Sincerely,

Mary Vincent
Financial Specialist

MV/ks

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NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Robert F. Chase, President
Reg Weaver, Vice President
Dennis Van Roekel, Secretary-Treasurer
Don Cameron, Executive Director

1201 16th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036-3290

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June 11, 1998

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JUN 15 1998

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

The Honorable William Kennard
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW
Washington, DC 20554

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Dear Chairman Kennard:

I am writing on behalf of NEA's 2.4 million members -- and the tens of millions of students we teach -- to urge you to maintain full support and full funding for the E-Rate program. More than 30,000 applications for discounted Internet access, phone service, and internal wiring have poured into the Schools and Libraries Corporation, demonstrating the magnitude of demand for this important program.

The enthusiasm from the ranks of our own membership for this program is also unprecedented, as thousands of NEA members have written to the FCC, the Congress and the telecommunications companies telling them what the E-Rate program would mean to their schools, and to their students. We are talking about nothing less than the future of education, and the economic future of this nation, because they are inextricably linked to the ability of future generations of Americans to master technology, and to access information. Other nations have already recognized this fact, and are providing their citizens with the requisite tools and resources that the digital age will require. It should concern the FCC that there are more than 300,000 high technology jobs already unfilled in this nation, with employers talking about importing overseas workers to fill them.

Frankly, I am appalled at the amount of misinformation that has been disseminated about the E-Rate program over the past several weeks. The vast majority of applications (73%) are for \$25,000 or less, and 13% are for \$1,000 or less -- hardly an "out-of-control entitlement," as *TIME* magazine so unfairly represented the program on May 25. I am also distressed by the claims of the telecommunications companies -- AT&T and MCI in particular -- that they cannot afford to contribute to E-Rate funding, when they are enjoying record profits and the benefits of generous reductions in local access charges as a result of the same legislation that created the E-Rate program.

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Federal Communications Commission letter/Page 2
June 11, 1998

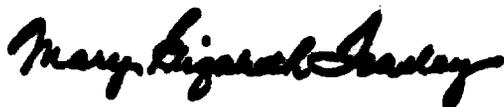
The E-Rate program is necessary, timely, and, perhaps most important, equitable. Only 27% of this nation's classrooms -- and only 14% of classrooms in low-income schools -- are linked to the Internet. That's why the Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service, and subsequently the FCC, determined that the E-Rate's highest discounts will go to the neediest districts.

I want to particularly urge you to maintain a key provision of the E-Rate program -- its provision for internal wiring. A cut in that provision would further exacerbate the inequities between rich and poor school districts, because over 50% of the discount requests for internal connections come from the neediest schools -- those eligible for 80 and 90% discounts. I also believe that if we deny these poor districts access to telecommunications services, we may also be denying their students' civil rights, which would be the worst of unintended consequences.

Congress passed the Snowe-Rockefeller-Exon-Kerrey (E-Rate) provision of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 to provide universal service to schools and libraries. The law specifically includes classrooms. "Universal" means just that -- urban, suburban, and rural; poor and rich; public and private; all races and ethnic groups. Everyone deserves access to these services, because they are the fundamental avenues to employment and success for all Americans in the 21st century.

Please ensure that the 30,000 applications on file receive the discounts and services they have requested, and please lay the groundwork for stable future funding of this vital program.

Sincerely yours,



Mary Elizabeth Teasley
Director of Government Relations

cc: The Honorable Harold Furchtgott-Roth
The Honorable Susan Ness
The Honorable Michael Powell
The Honorable Gloria Tristani

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CC 96-48

Watersmeet Township School District

N4720 Hwy 45, P.O. Box 217
Watersmeet, MI 49969
Phone: 906/358-4504
Fax: 906/358-4713

EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

June 9, 1998

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JUN 15 1998

The Honorable William E. Kennard
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

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Sincerely,

Debra L. Zelinski

Debra L. Zelinski
Superintendent

CC: Commissioner Susan Ness
Harold Furchtgott-Roth

Michael Powell
Gloria Tristani

Post-It™ Fax Note	7671	Date	6/9/98	# of pages	1
To	Commissioner Susan Ness	From	Debra Zelinski		
Co./Dept.		Co.	Watersmeet School		
Phone #		Phone #	906/358-4504		
Fax #	906/418-2821	Fax #	906/358-4713		

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