



Acting Chairman Michael Copps  
Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Commissioner Robert McDowell

Re: WC Docket No. 09-51

June 1, 2009

Dear FCC Acting Chairman and Commissioners:

Since 1961, the ASPIRA Association has been working at the grassroots level to provide programs that encourage Hispanic students to stay in school, prepare them to succeed in the educational arena, develop their leadership skills, and to serve their community. ASPIRA promotes the empowerment of the Puerto Rican and Latino community by developing and nurturing the leadership, intellectual, and cultural potential of its youth so that they may contribute their skills and dedication to the fullest development of the Puerto Rican and Latino community everywhere.

In the past decade, we have seen the benefits that the latest technologies have brought to Hispanic youth. Broadband technology enables new educational opportunities and links young people to resources in their communities. Unfortunately though, a broadband connection still remains out of reach for many students, especially Latino students. We urge the FCC to bring broadband to every school and household in the country through the creation of a national broadband plan.

The Internet is becoming an increasingly important supplement to a classroom education. Nickelodeon conducted a study on “The Digital Family” and found that 85% of children use the Internet to help them do better in school, while 93% of them say that it helps them learn. According to the National Council for Online Learning, 26 states have state virtual schools, which help increase access to advanced courses for students in rural and impoverished areas. This is a great start but in order to erase the digital divide and provide a more level-playing field, all students must have equitable access to the same educational opportunities. Unless disparities in broadband access are corrected, American students’ education could suffer and Latino students will suffer disproportionately.

We have seen firsthand the confidence and pride that students gain while acquiring new computer skills. At our Community Technology Centers, we enable students, parents and the community to learn about computers and the Internet through our workshops. Our

centers also provide students with computers and Internet access to do their homework and access information online.

But as broadband becomes more accessible, parents, teachers, and school administrators must be able to protect children from inappropriate content. Broadband service providers often offer filters and other safeguards to ensure that kids are accessing age-appropriate content. Providers must have the authority to manage their networks to ensure that these safeguards are functional and in place. We hope that the FCC's national broadband strategy will enable providers to effectively manage their networks to ensure the most safe and high-quality user experience.

ASPIRA has seen the value that broadband technology has in enriching Latino students' education. We hope that the FCC will ensure that all Latino students and indeed all American students have access to the same opportunities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ronald Blackburn Moreno". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Ronald Blackburn Moreno  
President and CEO