

Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street SW  
Washington, DC 20554

April 23, 2012

In the Matter of	)	
	)	
Lifeline and Link Up Reform and Modernization	)	WC Docket No. 11-42
	)	
Lifeline and Link Up	)	WC Docket No. 03-109
	)	
Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service	)	CC Docket No. 96-45
	)	WC Docket No. 12-23
Advancing Broadband Availability Through Digital Literacy Training	)	

Dear Sir/Madame:

I am writing today in response to the FCC's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking which, among other things, proposes a Digital Literacy Pilot to fund schools and libraries operating digital literacy training courses. Before delving into my response to the proposed pilot, I want to first thank the FCC for your continued support for the E-Rate program. The E-Rate program provides critical discounts to assist schools (like mine) to obtain affordable telecommunications and internet access.

I am the Superintendent of Kuspuk School District in western Alaska. The district serves approximately 340 students K-12 over an area of 12,000 square miles where the only means of transportation most times is via airplane. We are an isolated, rural school district where the use of e-rate funds is a critical component to our offerings for students to receive a well-rounded education by having access to information, courses and connectivity to the outside world that would otherwise be impossible.

The pilot would provide grants to K-12 schools and libraries, lasting four years, to hire trainers, conduct training courses and provide resources/materials to those who lack digital literacy skills. While the FCC does not propose to fund the pilot using E-Rate funds, it does propose implementing and administering the program through the same division that oversees the E-Rate program. Specifically, the FCC proposes implementing/administering the program through the Schools & Libraries Division of the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC).

I am concerned that operating the pilot through E-Rate will undermine the important and ongoing work of E-Rate, causing delays in the program's application and appeal processes, creating auditing problems and results in problematic precedents for E-Rate's eligible services. **Specifically, I oppose the proposal to operate/administer the proposed pilot through the E-Rate program.**

Our district greatly relies on the use of technology to deliver educational coursework and opportunities to our students. We are able to provide this service due to E-Rate funding. Digital learning is – and should be – both a concern and a priority by all persons that are connected to the education of our young people: school districts, state and federal governments and agencies that have ties to this incredibly important component of our way of life. We have a moral, ethical and professional obligation to provide the best possible services to help our children be the best that they can be – and having access through the complete implementation of the National Broadband Plan is a way for the FCC to help expand digital learning and literacy.

E-Rate is a very important part of the educational opportunity that we have in our district. It is oversubscribed and underfunded and to divert resources away from the program before it fulfills its stated goals would be premature and shortsighted. Please don't let this happen to this program.

Thank you for considering my response as you move forward with your decision on the Digital Literacy Pilot. I applaud the FCC for its continued efforts to protect the already oversubscribed E-Rate program by not funding the pilot with E-Rate funding. I urge you to take similar protective measures when it comes to the implementation and administration of the pilot; please ensure that critical, limited E-Rate resources—both fiscal and administrative—are protected.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brad Allen", written in a cursive style.

Brad Allen

Superintendent – Kuspuk School District