



Putnam County R-I Schools

Heath Halley, Superintendent

803 S. 20th • Unionville, MO 63565 • Phone 660-947-3361 • Fax 660-947-2912
www.putnamcountyr1.net

Jeremy Watt
High School Principal
803 S. 20th

Barbara Hodges
Middle School Principal
802 S. 18th

Donna Altiser
Elementary Principal
801 S. 20th

September 9, 2013

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington DC 20554

Dear Sir or Madam:

Thank you for the opportunity to make comments in response to the FCC's Notice of Proposed Rulemaking which, among other things, proposes changes to the E-Rate program. E-Rate has been very beneficial to the schools in my area and we are grateful for the assistance it has provided.

Putnam County R-I School is a small rural district in northern Missouri. We rely on E-Rate to provide financial assistance for our telecommunications system. Education funding in Missouri has been 8-10% below full funding for five years and we are struggling financially to provide a quality education for our students. E-Rate assistance is essential to our budget.

We are also part of a four-school consortium that uses a distance learning network to provide educational services to the four schools. All four schools are small and rural and are not able to provide all curriculum requirements. For example, Green City Schools has a certified Physics teacher; she provides Physics to all four schools. Putnam County has a Spanish teacher and she provides Spanish to all the schools as well. The interactive system is built on a fiber optic network and the large fees are paid in part with E-Rate funding each year.

For our school, E-Rate is a successful program that we continue to rely on and a program that must continue to provide funding critical for telecommunications and connectivity. Changes in the E-Rate program could easily cause the distance learning network to disband, as each school in the consortium is facing continued cuts of state funding. Each school's students would then lose educational opportunities which are important to their future success.

The E-Rate program likely needs some refinement and small changes. Increased funding would be an important step in stepping up the effectiveness of the program. However, if increased funding does not become available, I urge the FCC to continue supporting telecommunications and connectivity as priorities for funding.

Sincerely,

Heath B. Halley
Superintendent of Schools