WAGON MOUND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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As the Business Manager at the Wagon Mound Public Schools in Wagon Mound, New Mexico I know how important digital learning is to providing our students with the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed academically and in the workforce. Each day, our students go online to access a wealth of excellent educational content and to communicate and collaborate with their peers and their teachers. None of this would be possible without the E-Rate, which has helped us to build the networks that connect our students, teachers and parents.

I write today to urge the Federal Communications Commission to make certain that E-Rate continues to support critical services such as e-mail, collaboration tools and web hosting and to support raising the program's annual funding level to meet demand.

1. **Retain the Eligibility for Support of E-mail, Collaboration Tools and Web Hosting**
While I understand the importance of modernizing E-Rate and removing support from older services that are less relevant today than they were 15 years ago, I do not believe that e-mail, collaboration tools and web hosting should lose their eligibility for support. These three services remain the foundation for how students, teachers and parents interact with each other. For our students, collaboration tools allow them to comment on each other's work, collaborate on assignments and transmit research and papers. For our teachers, e-mail continues to be the central means through which they communicate with one another and reach out to parents about their students' work. For parents, all three of these services provide them with opportunities to see how their children are performing academically and to discuss critical education issues with their children and their children's teachers. Eliminating support for these three services makes no sense to me and would cause considerable financial hardship for us. We request that the FCC maintain their E-Rate eligibility.

2. **Allow Collaboration Tools to be Eligible for Support under Both Web Hosting and E-mail Categories**
As I mentioned above, collaboration tools have been tremendously helpful to us educationally. Not only do we believe that these tools should remain eligible for discount under the Web Hosting category, we request that the FCC also consider making them eligible under the E-mail category because their communication and interactive functionalities are very similar to those of e-mail services.

3. **Raise the E-Rate's Annual Cap**
Even though the bandwidth needs of our students and educators has grown rapidly, the E-Rate program's annual spending has remained almost unchanged since the program began. With our need for more bandwidth expected to grow over the next 5 years, I am concerned that we will be unable to meet our future educational needs unless E-Rate funding grows to keep pace. Please consider adding more funds to this important program.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Teresa P. Casias, Business Manager - Wagon Mound Public Schools