School and District Leader Support Letter for High-Speed Broadband and Wi-Fi Through E-Rate Category Two Services

Before the
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
Washington, DC 20554

In the Matter of

Modernization of the E-Rate Program for Schools and Libraries

WC Docket No. 13-184

REPLY COMMENTS IN THE FORM OF A LETTER FROM 191 SCHOOL AND DISTRICT LEADERS FROM 38 STATES REQUESTING THAT THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION SUPPORT HIGH-SPEED BROADBAND AND WI-FI THROUGH E-RATE CATEGORY TWO SERVICES. RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED BY THE ALLIANCE FOR EXCELLENT EDUCATION ON BEHALF OF THE SIGNATORIES
School and District Leader Support Letter for High-Speed Broadband and Wi-Fi Through E-Rate Category Two Services

November 7, 2017

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: WC Docket No. 13-184

Dear Chairman Pai, Commissioner Clyburn, Commissioner O’Rielly, Commissioner Carr, and Commissioner Rosenworcel:

We, the undersigned school and district leaders, write in response to the Public Notice, which requests comments on the sufficiency of budgets for category two services under the Federal Communications Commission’s (FCC’s) E-rate program. Category two services that support high-speed internet access, including reliable Wi-Fi, are vital for providing all students with a quality education to prepare them for today’s modern economy. As such, many of us supported the FCC’s E-rate Modernization Orders, adopted in 2014 and implemented in 2015, that set a target of providing $1 billion annually for five years to support category two services. Indeed, since adoption of the E-rate Modernization Orders, thousands of the nation’s schools have been connected to high-speed Wi-Fi through the E-rate program.

Specifically, a recent analysis conducted by Funds for Learning® and the Alliance for Excellent Education finds in 2015 the FCC provided more than $1 billion to 42,705 schools nationwide to support Wi-Fi services and infrastructure.¹ This is important because in the two years prior to the adoption of the E-rate Modernization Orders no E-rate funds were disbursed to support Wi-Fi. Moreover, of the E-rate funds disbursed for Wi-Fi in 2015, more than 80 percent supported low-income schools and one-third supported rural schools.² This analysis shows that the FCC is not only meeting the E-rate Modernization Orders’ target of providing $1 billion annually to support category two services, but that these funds are supporting the highest-need schools.

Nonetheless, there still is work to be done to ensure that all students attend a school with access to high-speed Wi-Fi. According to EducationSuperHighway, 6.5 million students still lack high-speed broadband for digital learning and 10,000 schools report having insufficient Wi-Fi in their classrooms.³ Therefore, it is essential that the FCC maintain its commitment through the E-rate Modernization Orders to provide support for category two services for the next five years and beyond. The FCC’s role in supporting access to high-speed Wi-Fi in schools and classrooms is critical to preparing the nation’s students to compete in an increasingly global workforce.

Sincerely,

Simon Canalez
Superintendent
Brawley Union High School District, CA

Joseph Barrow
Superintendent
Fayette County Schools, GA

² Ibid.
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David Miyashiro  
Superintendent  
Cajon Valley Union School District, CA

Steven Clason  
Superintendent  
Whitko Community Schools, IN

JOHNNY SATTERWHITE  
SUPERINTENDENT  
SAN ANTONIO, TX

Adrian Palazuelos  
Superintendent  
Fillmore Unified School District, CA

Carol Kelley  
Superintendent  
Oak Park Elementary School District 97, IL

April Grace  
Superintendent  
Shawnee Public Schools, OK

Cari Guden  
District Administrator  
Edgar School District, WI

Joshua Olstad  
IT Director  
Oyster River Cooperative School District, NH

Anne Campbell  
San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools  
San Mateo County Office of Education, CA

Patricia Deklotz  
Superintendent  
Kettle Moraine, WI

David Krenz  
Superintendent  
Austin, MN

Ana Riley  
Superintendent  
Portsmouth School Department, RI

Eric Gebhart  
Superintendent  
Nenana City School District, AK

Michael Mitchell  
Principal  
Arts Academy in the Woods, MI

Andy Ashley  
Superintendent  
Cedar Ridge, AR

Melonie Hau  
Superintendent  
Duncan Public Schools, OK

Donna DeSiato  
Superintendent  
East Syracuse Minoa CSD, NY

Shane Wheeler  
HS Principal  
Lynnville-Sully Community School District, IA

Theresa Estrada  
Superintendent  
Knightsen Elementary School, CA

Dr James Morse  
Superintendent, SAU 5 Oyster River  
Cooperative School District, NH

Jeff Moorhouse  
Director of Schools  
Greeneville City Schools, TN

Dennis Copeland  
Superintendent  
Mountainburg School District, AR

Michael Novotny  
Superintendent  
Salado ISD, TX

Shelly Fransen  
Superintendent, SHELL KNOB SCHOOL  
DISTRICT #78, MO

Lee Nittel  
Superintendent  
Mine Hill TWP, NJ

Jaime Velasco  
Superintendent of Schools  
Pettus Independent School District, TX
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Chris Gdowski
Superintendent
Adams 12 Five Star Schools, CO

Bill Shields
Superintendent
CCSD 93, IL

Steven Parker
Superintendent
Lancaster County Public Schools, VA

Dan Foster
Superintendent, Eastern Pulaski Community School Corporation, IN

Laurie Gossens
Superintendent
Washington South SU, VT

Ted Baechtold
Superintendent
Eastern Greene Schools, IN

Scott Thielman
Superintendent of Schools, Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose Schools ISD #877, MN

Timothy Frederiks
Education Dept Chairperson
Centenary University, NJ

Michael Carolan
Superintendent
Dover-Eyota Public Schools, MN

Keith Medlin
Chief Information & Technology Officer
Chatham County Schools, NC

Colleen Murray
Superintendent
Bethany Public School District, CT

Alan Jamison
Superintendent
USD 360 Caldwell Schools, KS

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Superintendent
Parkview School District, WI

Walter Young
Superintendent
Troy Area School District, PA

Brenda Tanner
Superintendent
Orange County Public Schools, VA

Larry Didway
Superintendent
Oregon City School District, OR

James Cowley
Superintendent
Calhoun County ISD. TX

Robert Pfau
IT Director
Bristol Township, PA

Karen Sullivan
Superintendent
Indian Prairie District 204, IL

Greg Williams
Superintendent
New Lebanon Local Schools, OH

John Russo
Superintendent
Tinton Falls, NJ

Julie Kukenberger
Superintendent
Scarborough Public Schools, ME

Jeff Gibboney
Superintendent
Bloomfield School District, IN

Jon Bartelt
Superintendent
Bloomingdale School District 13, IL

Joe Kramer
Superintendent
Pocahontas Area Community School District, IA

Morris Ravenell
Superintendent
Dorchester School District 4, SC
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Melissa Varley
Superintendent
Florham Park School District, NJ

Aubrey Johnson
Superintendent
New Brunswick, NJ

Vicki Brunn
Superintendent
Central Local, OH

Randy Nelson
Superintendent of Schools
School District of La Crosse, WI

Michael Fetherman
Superintendent
Cedar Grove, NJ

Jim Roberts
Superintendent, Bartholomew Consolidated School Corporation, IN

Rosemarie Kraeger
Superintendent
Middletown, RI

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Superintendent
Talladega County, AL

Scott Oswald
Superintendent
Collingswood / Oaklyn, NJ

Robert Pletka
Superintendent,
Fullerton School District, CA

Patrick Miller
Superintendent
Greene County Schools, NC

Stacy Lovdahl
Instructional Technology
Catawba County, NC

Peter Burrows
Superintendent
Addison Central School District, VT

Dan Kaffenbarger
Superintendent
Madison-Champaign ESC, OH

Martin McGinley
District Administrator
Wheatland J1 School District, WI

Christine Johnson
Superintendent
Hoboken Public School District, NJ

Lisa Weber
Superintendent
Waubun-Ogema-White Earth Schools, MN

Scott Bailey
Superintendent
Desert Sands, CA

Eugene Kotulka
Superintendent
Alleghany County Public Schools, VA

Mario Andrade
Superintendent
Bristol Warren Regional District, RI

David James
Superintendent
Akron Public Schools, OH

Chris Marczak
Superintendent
Maury County Public Schools, TN

Patricia Vickman
Superintendent
Southern Door County School District, WI

Mort Geivett
Superintendent
Willows Unified School District, CA

Eva Merkel
Superintendent
Lakeland School Corporation, IN

Melissa Moore
Superintendent
El Segundo Unified School District, CA
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>School/Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>James Pacey</td>
<td>Director of Technology</td>
<td>Harlingen CISD, TX</td>
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<tr>
<td>Steve Shelton</td>
<td>Associate Superintendent</td>
<td>Raytown C-2 School District, MO</td>
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<td>Greg Stott</td>
<td>Superintendent</td>
<td>Kings CSD 144, IL</td>
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<td>Michael Lubelfeld</td>
<td>Superintendent of Schools</td>
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<td>Bill Hill</td>
<td>Superintendent</td>
<td>Bristol Bay Borough School District, AK</td>
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<td>Todd Prusator</td>
<td>Superintendent, Rochelle Community School</td>
<td>Consolidated School District #231, IL</td>
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<td>Debra Howe</td>
<td>Superintendent</td>
<td>Tri-Creek School Corporation, IN</td>
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<td>Lori Manion</td>
<td>Superintendent</td>
<td>Rib Lake School District, WI</td>
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<td>Stanton Adcock</td>
<td>Superintendent/Principal</td>
<td>Paw Paw CUSD 271, IL</td>
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<td>Adam Brumbaugh</td>
<td>Superintendent</td>
<td>West Carroll CUSD 314, IL</td>
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<td>Mary Hainstock</td>
<td>Superintendent</td>
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<td>Richard Arkanoff</td>
<td>Superintendent, Center Grove Community</td>
<td>School Corporation, IN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sheila Harrity</td>
<td>Superintendent-Director, Montachusset School</td>
<td>Vocational Technical School, MA</td>
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<td>Thomas Mahoney</td>
<td>Superintendent</td>
<td>Oregon CUSD 220, IL</td>
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<td>PJ Caposey</td>
<td>Superintendent</td>
<td>Meridian CUSD 223, IL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rick Cortright</td>
<td>Technology Coordinator</td>
<td>Dallas County Schools, AL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Edythe Austermuhl</td>
<td>Superintendent</td>
<td>Berlin Township School District, NJ</td>
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<td>Glenn Robbins</td>
<td>Superintendent</td>
<td>Tabernacle Township School District, NJ</td>
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<td>Tom Edington</td>
<td>Superintendent</td>
<td>Wawasee Community Schools, IN</td>
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<td>Kellie Bohn</td>
<td>Superintendent</td>
<td>Genoa City Jr. 2 School District, WI</td>
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<td>James Wyse</td>
<td>Superintendent</td>
<td>Evergreen Local School District, OH</td>
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<td>Lorie Hackett</td>
<td>Superintendent</td>
<td>Whitehall Coplay, PA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mary Allen</td>
<td>District Administrator</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chris Metras</td>
<td>School Superintendent</td>
<td>Beecher-Dunbar-Pembine School, WI</td>
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<td>Ann Linson</td>
<td>Superintendent</td>
<td>East Noble School Corporation, IN</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michael McCormick</td>
<td>Superintendent</td>
<td>Val Verde USD, CA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Pam Gildersleeve-Hernandez
Superintendent, San Antonio Union Elementary School District, CA

Jimmy Pryor
Assistant Superintendent
Spartanburg School District 1, SC

Steve Wigton
Superintendent
Lancaster City Schools, OH

Jennifer Shepard
Assistant Superintendent
Huntington Beach City School District, CA

Katrice Noble
Deputy Director
Lift For Life Academy, MO

Derk Garcia
Superintendent
Roseville City School District, CA

Stacey Schmidt
Superintendent
Porter Township School Corporation, IN

Theresa Rouse
Superintendent
Joliet Public Schools District 86, IL

Shannon Duling
Superintendent
Princeville CUSD #326, IL

Jeffrey Collier
Superintendent
Au Gres-Sims School District, MI

Linda Kimble
Superintendent
Anaheim Elementary, CA

Paul DiRupo
Superintendent
Lenape Valley Regional HS, NJ

Xandra Brooks-Keys
Superintendent
Coahoma County School District, MS

Patricia Camp
Superintendent
Rahway Public Schools, NJ

Christine Johnson
Superintendent of Schools
Hoboken Public Schools, NJ

Susan Wilson
Superintendent
Blue Ridge CUSD 18, IL

Chuck Ehler
Superintendent
Rushford-Peterson Schools, MN

John Ravally
Superintendent of Schools
Franklin Township Public Schools, NJ

Edward Zuniga
Superintendent
El Monte Union High School, CA

Joe Sanfelippo
Superintendent
Fall Creek Schools, WI

Kimberly Fry
Superintendent
Rochester School District #401, WA

Beth Niedermeyer
Superintendent
Noblesville, IN

Larry Bennett
Superintendent
Newport Special School District, AR

Freddie Williamson
Superintendent
Hoke County Schools, NC

Damaris Rau
Superintendent of Schools
School District of Lancaster, PA

Mary Anne Wright
Superintendent
Northwestern Lehigh, PA
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John Weidner, Sr.
Superintendent of Schools
Twin River School District, NE

Kevin West
Superintendent of Schools
East Orange, NJ

Phillip Wright
Director of Schools
Giles County School System, TN

Patrick McAleer
Superintendent
Pitman Public Schools, NJ

Mark Bielang
Superintendent
Portage Public Schools, MI

Barbara Malkas, Ed.D.
Superintendent
North Adams Public Schools, MA

Kenny Schwengel
Superintendent
Arthur CUSD 305, IL

Jerry Almendarez
Superintendent
Colton Joint Unified, CA

Larry Smalley
Superintendent
Glendale River Hills, WI

Lois Davies
Superintendent
Pateros School District, WA

Daniel Seegmiller
Superintendent of Schools
Weld RE-4, CO

Frank Hewins
Superintendent
Franklin Pierce Schools, WA

Mark Burnette
Assistant Superintendent
Carroll County Public Schools, VA

George Gerardo
IT Director
West-MEC, AZ

Kirk Koennecke
Superintendent
Graham Local Schools, OH

Sandra Sheldon
Superintendent
Churchill County School District, NV

Matt Plater
Superintendent
Havana CUSD 126, IL

Nicole Otte
Director
Central Nine Career Center, IN

Yolanda Valdez
Superintendent
Cutler Orosi JUSD, CA

Richard Fry
Superintendent of Schools
Big Spring School District, PA

Robert Hudosn Assistant
Superintendent
Aptakisic-Tripp CCSD102, IL

Shon Hocker
Superintendent
Big Horn County SD #1, WY

John Krimmel
Superintendent
Airport Community Schools, MI

Bridget O'Connell
Superintendent
Palisades, PA

Ryan Snoddy
Superintendent
Northwestern School Corporation, IN

Michelle Hartmann
Superintendent
Pawnee ISD, TX
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Brian Schmitt  
Superintendent  
Genesee Valley CSD, NY

James Roselli  
Superintendent, Berkeley Township Elementary School District, NJ

Jerry North  
Superintendent  
Plumsted Township School District, NJ

Chris Johnson  
Superintendent  
Crane R-III, MO

Daniel Mannix  
Superintendent of Schools  
Beckmantown CSD, NY

Hanifi Oguz  
Executive Director  
BEEHIVE ACADEMY, UT

Barbara Nemko  
Napa County Superintendent of Schools  
Napa County Office of Education, CA

Cheryl Long  
Business Administrator  
The Graham School, OH

Shane Hotchkiss  
Superintendent  
Bermudian Springs School District, PA

Matthew Martz  
Superintendent, WORTH COUNTY R-III SCHOOL DISTRICT, MO

Harlan Ptomey  
Superintendent  
Cedar Bluffs, NE

Thomas Taylor  
Superintendent  
Hanover Community Schools, IN

Woodbury Clift  
Director of Education, Collaborative for Educational Services and DYS, MA

Anne Silavs  
Superintendent  
Cypress School District, CA

Charmian Fletcher  
Superintendent  
Ithaca Public Schools, MI

Michael Davino  
Superintendent  
Springfield Schools, NJ

Ed Stoloski  
Superintendent  
East Amwell, NJ

John VanLoon  
Superintendent  
Ravenna Public Schools, MI

Christopher Garlin  
CEO  
Dr. Lena Edwards Academic Charter School, NJ

Mark Johnston  
Superintendent  
Shenandoah County Public Schools, VA

Charles Berkley  
Superintendent  
Lunenburg, VA

Thomas Gibbs  
Superintendent  
Athens City School District, OH

Dr. Janet Neufeld  
Superintendent  
Pawhuska, OK

Gregg Parks  
Superintendent  
Nevis Public School, MN

Rob Jackson  
Superintendent  
Edenton - Chowan Schools, NC

Brent ODaniell  
Superintendent  
Genoa Kingston CUSD #424, IL
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Jeff Butts
Superintendent
M.S.D. of Wayne Township, IN

Nick Polyak
Superintendent
Leyden High School District 212, IL

Pete Nasir
Superintendent
Wellsville-Middletown R-1 School Dist., MO

Chris Vignery
Superintendent
North Ottawa County Schools, KS

George Rierzon
Superintendent
Unionville-Sebewaing Area School District, MI

Chuck Lane
Superintendent
Centralia High School, IL

Jon Ceny
Superintendent
Bancroft-Rosalie Community School, NE