

# CCSESA FOCUS

## A Weekly Update to County Superintendents of Schools

Monday, December 01, 2014

### **Action Requested—Contact the FCC on E-Rate by Thursday, December 4**

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is scheduled to take action on Thursday, December 11, on a proposal by FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler to increase the E-Rate cap by \$1.5 billion, to \$3.9 billion annually. The increase is part of a comprehensive plan by Chairman Wheeler to provide all schools with access to high-speed internet connections. E-Rate is critically important to efforts here in California to provide broadband connectivity for all students for both instructional and assessment purposes.

CCSESA is submitting comments to members of the FCC in support of the proposal to increase the E-Rate cap. A copy of CCSESA's letter is attached.

It is extremely important that members of the FCC hear from education agencies, organizations and individuals around the country in support of the proposal to increase the cap. **The deadline for comments is December 4.** A copy of the CCSESA letter in word format is also attached for your convenience. Please individualize the letter and add at least a couple of sentences to reflect the importance of E-Rate and Broadband connectivity to schools in your county, and then submit your letter to the members of the FCC. Also attached is the contact information for the five members of the FCC.

For your information, the E-Rate cap was set at \$2.25 billion in 1997 and has increased only modestly to \$2.4 billion at this time. This represents an increase of less than a total of 7% over 17 years! If the FCC approves the proposal, the additional funding for E-Rate will be paid for by an increase in consumers' phone bills of about 16 cents per month.

For additional information or assistance, please contact Amanda Dickey at [adickey@ccsesa.org](mailto:adickey@ccsesa.org).

**Contact: Peter Birdsall, Executive Director • P: (916) 446-3095 • C. (916) 719-1315**  
[pbirdsall@ccsesa.org](mailto:pbirdsall@ccsesa.org) • [www.ccsesa.org](http://www.ccsesa.org)



CCSESA

## California County Superintendents Educational Services Association

1121 L Street, Suite 510, Sacramento, CA 95814 ■ P 916.446.3095 ■ F 916.448.7801 ■ www.ccsesa.org

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December 1, 2014

Federal Communications Commission

445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW

Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Commissioners:

On behalf of the California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (CCSESA), a statewide association that represents all California county superintendents of schools, I am writing to express our support for the increase to the E-Rate cap proposed by Chairman Wheeler. Over the last decade, the E-Rate program has played an essential role in the helping schools keep pace with the technological innovations that are vital to preparing students for today's global economy. Like the rest of the nation, California's schools serve diverse communities in very different geographic settings and it is an ongoing challenge to provide access and equity in classroom technology.

**The cap increase is an essential and reasonable response to the growing demand on bandwidth.** When E-Rate was created in 1997, the common connectivity rate was 50 kbps, the average computer was a 20 pound desktop, only 22% of children aged 0 to 17 lived in a household with internet access, and the E-Rate cap was \$2.25 billion. Today, the common connectivity rate is 100 mbps (200 times faster than 1997 speeds), the average computer fits in the palm of your hand, 81% of children aged 0 to 17 live in a household with internet access, and the yet the E-Rate cap is still only \$2.4 billion. Despite massive advances in technology and connectivity, and a 400% increase in bandwidth demand, the E-Rate cap has remained almost entirely stagnant for two decades. The proposed increase would directly address this critical problem. Without this assistance, many schools will be unable to provide the access to technology that has become crucial to preparing students for success in life and work.

**The proposed increase will allow California schools to make significant and sustainable investments in technology infrastructure.** According to data collected by California's K-12 High Speed Network, more than 2,000 California schools do not have adequate access to basic broadband (i.e. 10Mbps) services. Last year, California's transition to the next generation online assessments highlighted significant gaps in connectivity across the state. The proposed cap increase would provide the increased resources and fiscal stability schools need to pursue serious and scalable investments in technology infrastructure.

California's county superintendents work directly with every school district in our state. We are united in our concern that significant action is needed to help schools keep pace with technology needs. The proposed increase in the E-Rate cap is vitally important to schools throughout California and the nation, and has our very strong support.



## California County Superintendents Educational Services Association

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CCSESA urges you to support the proposed E-Rate cap increase when it comes before the Commission on December 11<sup>th</sup>. Please contact us if we can provide additional information on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Peter Birdsall  
CCSESA Executive Director

December 1, 2014

Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
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Sincerely,

## **FCC COMMISSIONER ADDRESS LIST**

<p>The Honorable Tom Wheeler Federal Communications Commission 445 12th Street, SW Washington, D.C. 20554 Email: <a href="mailto:Tom.Wheeler@fcc.gov">Tom.Wheeler@fcc.gov</a></p>	<p>The Honorable Mignon Clyburn Federal Communications Commission 445 12th Street, SW Washington, D.C. 20554 Email: <a href="mailto:Mignon.Clyburn@fcc.gov">Mignon.Clyburn@fcc.gov</a></p>
<p>The Honorable Jessica Rosenworcel Federal Communications Commission 445 12th Street, SW Washington, D.C. 20554 Email: <a href="mailto:Jessica.Rosenworcel@fcc.gov">Jessica.Rosenworcel@fcc.gov</a></p>	<p>The Honorable Ajit Pai Federal Communications Commission 445 12th Street, SW Washington, D.C. 20554 Email: <a href="mailto:Ajit.Pai@fcc.gov">Ajit.Pai@fcc.gov</a></p>
<p>The Honorable Michael O’Rielly Federal Communications Commission 445 12th Street, SW Washington, D.C. 20554 Email: <a href="mailto:Mike.O’Rielly@fcc.gov">Mike.O’Rielly@fcc.gov</a></p>	