



HACKETT SCHOOL DISTRICT



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November 14, 2017

Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 Twelfth Street SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: *Amendment of Parts 1, 21, 73, 74 and 101 of the Commission’s Rules to Facilitate the Provision of Fixed and Mobile Broadband Access, Educational and other Advanced Services in the 2150-2162 and 2500-2690 MHz bands – WT Docket No. 03-66 -*

Dear Ms. Dortch,

I am writing to you on behalf of Hackett School District to address the need for broadband services within our community. As you are aware, many rural communities – including Sebastian County, in Arkansas do not have access to fast and reliable broadband services. Unfortunately, this shortage impacts Hackett School District’s educational mission. Education is an extremely important and powerful tool that should not be pushed to the side. With our technology-driven world, it is vital to provide educational institutions with the resources they need to teach the nation’s current and future leaders.

While there is no complete solution to this problem, a very effective and low cost step is for the FCC to issue new Educational Broadband Service (EBS) licenses in currently unlicensed areas. On June 6, 2014, the National EBS Association, the Catholic Telecommunications Network, the Hispanic Information Telecommunications Network and the Wireless Communications Association International (WCA) submitted a Consensus Proposal to the FCC. Hackett School District supports the Consensus Proposal which would allow the FCC to issue one or more new licenses covering Sebastian County, Arkansas. The issuance of new EBS licenses would allow for either direct construction by Hackett School District and/or leasing of excess capacity to commercial operators who could handle network construction. The availability of fast and reliable Internet services within our community will improve the educational experience of our students, help drive economic development in our rural community and may also generate royalty income to our school.

On behalf of Hackett School District, I urge the FCC to address the issue that vast areas – more than half of the land area of the U.S. – are not covered by EBS licenses. The Consensus Proposal to issue new licenses is already in place and has been agreed to by many prominent members within the EBS community. We request that the FCC act to facilitate the positive impact these new licenses can have in our community. Issuing new licenses per the Consensus Proposal is the quickest and most cost effective way to promote broadband access in rural America and requires only the reconciliation of FCC rules.

I appreciate your consideration in this matter.

Thank you,

Edward E. Ray
Superintendent of Schools