

KSDE, in collaboration with the State Educational Technology Directors Association (SETDA), the Schools, Health & Libraries Broadband Coalition (SHLB) and other state departments of education are working diligently and are asking the FCC to examine solutions to expedite equitable access to free and/or affordable broadband for educators, students and families. This proposal includes:

- Hot Spot Lending Programs: The FCC could make emergency funding available from the Universal Service Fund for hot spot lending programs by schools, libraries and other community organizations in areas where schools and libraries close down. Several urban and rural libraries have already implemented such programs. The technology is widely available, there are several providers that offer such services, and guidelines are widely available with advice about how to set up such programs. The FCC can authorize the use of USF funding for this purpose, as the FCC did when extending funding to Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria in 2017.
 - Waive E-rate Gift Rules: The FCC could temporarily waive E-rate and Rural Health Care (RHC) gift rules to allow schools and libraries and healthcare providers to accept donations of hot spots from commercial and non-commercial wireless providers to allow students to obtain low-cost wireless Internet access at home and in other community areas.
- Expand Affordable Broadband Offerings to Low-income People: The FCC could take affirmative steps to encourage/incentivize/require Internet Service Providers to augment their offerings of low-cost broadband service to the home. The FCC could, for instance, convene monthly meetings with commercial and non-commercial ISPs to encourage them to promote awareness of these programs, to extend the availability of existing programs for a longer period of time, and to open eligibility to more users.
- School Broadband Voucher Program: The FCC could work with the U.S. Department of Education to establish a voucher program to provide a subsidy to any service providers in an area where schools have closed that offer a free or low-cost broadband service to students at home (with minimum data/bandwidth requirements). To qualify for the program, each family of a school-aged student would obtain authorization (such as a letter or voucher) from the school/district for the student being served. The service provider would submit this authorization to a special department of the FCC that will reimburse the service providers for a certain dollar amount (perhaps \$50 per month per residential connection) to defray the cost of providing this service. The FCC would fund this subsidy from the Universal Service Fund only for as long as the school is closed.
 - Perhaps this idea could be coupled with a device subsidy program established by the State. Many students need tablets or laptops to be able to access the Internet at home. The FCC could subsidize the broadband connection if the State funds the distribution of devices.
- Extension of E-rate Networks: The FCC could grant the Petitions of the Boulder Valley School District and Microsoft/Virginia schools to allow broadband extensions to the home from schools and libraries. E-rate would not pay for these extensions, but schools would be permitted to allow these extensions without losing E-rate money (no cost allocation would be required).
- Connected Care: The FCC could expedite the adoption of a final Order funding the Connected Care proceeding to fund telemedicine solutions to the home. The FCC could authorize more funding than initially proposed, such as \$200M per year for three years.
- Extension of Filing Windows: SHLB has already asked for the RHC application window

to be extended to June 30. The spread of the virus has made such an extension even more important, as many of the same people handling the virus are also responsible for the RHC applications. The FCC should also extend the application deadline for E-rate applicants for one additional month (until April xx) because of the confusion and added workload on everyone.

- TV White Spaces: The FCC could expedite approval of new technical rules to promote TVWhite Spaces use and availability. The FCC recently adopted a new Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on this topic. Allowing greater power levels for TV White spaces, for instance, could encourage more schools, libraries and other anchor institutions to deploy antennas extending wireless broadband service to the communities (parks, residential areas, and tribal communities).
- EBS Window for Educational Organizations: The Commission could open a window for rural schools and education organizations to obtain rural EBS licenses, as requested by the SHLB Coalition and other parties in a Petition for Reconsideration filed in January of this year. SHLB has demonstrated through our prior filings that educational organizations are likely to deploy EBS service more quickly than the traditional commercial providers who already have unused spectrum in these rural markets.
- 9. Funding to expand WISP Service: The FCC could also provide supplemental funding for Wireless Internet Service Providers (WISPs) to deploy wireless broadband in unserved areas where schools are closed. WISPs can often deploy service more quickly than landline service providers.