



## STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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# MORE THAN 80% OF DISTRICTS, SCHOOLS SIGN UP FOR WIRELESS CONNECTIVITY

BOISE – More than 80 percent of eligible school districts and public charter schools have signed up to be connected to high-speed, uninterrupted wireless internet by the end of the 2013-2014 school year.

Of the possible 137 school districts and public charter schools eligible to participate in the first year of this statewide program, 93 school districts and 21 public charter schools, representing an estimated 200 schools, have chosen to participate. This represents nearly 90,000 students across the state. Some districts and charter schools were not eligible to opt in because they only serve elementary grades.

“As a state, it is our goal and our responsibility to ensure every child has equal access to the best educational opportunities, no matter where they live. It is clear schools are eager for this connectivity so they can provide teachers with the tools and resources necessary to meet the needs of every student,” Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Luna said.

Through Senate Bill 1200, the Idaho Legislature appropriated \$2.25 million “for the installation, repair, replacement and support of a wireless technology infrastructure, in each public school serving high school grades, of sufficient capacity to support utilization of mobile computing devices by all students in such grades.”

To meet this, the Idaho State Department of Education signed a five-year contract with Education Networks of America for a managed service that will provide not only the uninterrupted, high-speed wireless internet access in public high schools but also the ongoing support and repair required under the law. The contract came in under budget at \$2.1 million a year.

The network within the statewide contract will have the capacity to support students and staff using modern wireless technologies, such as laptops and tablets, during the school day.

Educators across the state have voiced their support for this opportunity to integrate more advanced technology into their classrooms in the coming year.

“I cannot express what a fantastic opportunity this is for our students,” said Alan Dunn, Superintendent of the Sugar-Salem School District. “Everyday students have access to more and more technology, and we want to use this technology to communicate in ways that are most meaningful to them. We anticipate that in the near future every student will have multiple ways to access the internet to enhance their educational experience, which will require robust wireless capabilities.”

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Heather Williams, Superintendent of the Gooding School District, said, "In today's classroom, we are asking our teachers and students to draw from multiple sources of information to create a dynamic learning environment that is relevant and rigorous for every child. To support this, we must have high-speed wireless access throughout our building."

"The Middleton School District appreciates this financial opportunity being provided by the SDE that will allow our high school to enhance our wireless connectivity, which helps prepare us for our Go One – Go On 1:1 Middleton High School laptop initiative. This opportunity will help ensure that our students have the needed reliable connectivity for daily research, lessons, and required testing with our new 1:1 laptops," said Richard Bauscher, Superintendent of the Middleton School District.

All schools that opted in for wireless connectivity this school year should be connected by March 2014. If a school district or charter school did not opt in this year, they will have the opportunity to opt in next school year.

For a full list of schools and districts that opted in this school year, please visit [http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/tech\\_services/requestForProposal.htm](http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/tech_services/requestForProposal.htm).

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