

THE WHITE HOUSE

OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL: ANSWERING THE PRESIDENT’S CALL TO ENRICH AMERICAN EDUCATION THROUGH CONNECTED

❖ Year of Action: Making Progress Through Executive Action ❖

Today, following up on his call to action, the President is announcing major progress toward realizing the ConnectED goal to get high-speed Internet connectivity and educational technology into classrooms, and into the hands of teachers trained on its advantages. The FCC and private sector are taking key steps to answer the President’s call, including through:

- Over \$750 million in private-sector commitments to deliver cutting-edge technologies to classrooms, including devices, free software, teacher professional development, and home wireless connectivity.
 - American companies are answering the President’s challenge to “dig deep” in support of ConnectED to enrich K-12 education, expand opportunities for students, and train, a 21st century workforce. These commitments include:
 - Apple – Pledged \$100 million in iPads, MacBooks, and other products along with content and professional development tools to enrich learning in disadvantaged schools.
 - AT&T – Pledged over \$100 million to provide middle-school students free Internet connectivity for educational devices over their wireless network for three years.
 - Autodesk – Pledged to expand the company’s “Design the Future” program to be available to every secondary school in the country – offering for free over \$250 million in value.
 - Microsoft – Committed to launch a substantial affordability program open to all U.S. public schools by deeply discounting the price of its Windows operating system, which will substantially bring down the cost of Windows-based devices.
 - O’Reilly Media – Partnering with Safari Books Online to make over \$100 million in educational content and tools available, for free, to every school in America.
 - Sprint – Committed to offer free wireless service for up to 50,000 low-income high school students over the next four years, valued at \$100 million.
 - Verizon – Announced a multi-year program to support the ConnectED vision through up to \$100 million in cash and in-kind commitments.
- A \$2 billion down-payment by the FCC’s E-Rate program to connect 20 million more students to next-generation broadband and wireless, beginning in 2014.
- An additional commitment to rural schools with over \$10 million in distance learning grants from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

These announcements will help realize next-generation connectivity to 99% of American students within five years, and begin this transformation of American classrooms immediately.

FURTHER DETAIL ON ANSWERING THE PRESIDENT'S CALL TO ENRICH AMERICAN EDUCATION THROUGH CONNECTED

In his State of the Union address, President Obama set an ambitious agenda to make 2014 a year of action: using his pen and his phone to take steps that increase prosperity and opportunity for America's middle class – including helping more kids prepare for college, gain career-ready skills, and compete in a global economy.

Last June, the President traveled to Mooresville, NC to announce ConnectED, an initiative designed to enrich K-12 education for every student in America – empowering teachers with the best technology and the training to make the most of it, and empowering students through individualized learning and rich, digital content. At the center of that program was a challenge to connect 99% of students to next-generation connectivity within five years, as a foundation for a transformation in the classroom.

Today, fewer than 30% of schools have the broadband they need to teach using today's technology; under ConnectED, 99% of American students will have access to next-generation broadband by 2017. That connectivity will be the bedrock of a transformation in the classroom experience for all students, regardless of income. As the President said in June, "In a Nation where we expect free WiFi with our coffee, why shouldn't we have it in our schools?"

The President challenged the FCC, Federal agencies, Congress, the private sector, and communities to rise to this challenge and deliver connectivity, professional development for teachers, low-cost learning devices, high-quality educational software, and home access.

Private Sector Commitments to Deliver Next-Generation Teaching and Learning

American companies are answering the President's challenge to support the enriched K-12 education, expanded opportunity, and the better-trained workforce that ConnectED can help deliver. These commitments amount to over **\$750 million** in direct commitments, and many times more in discounted products and services for America's students and teachers.

ConnectED is about more than wires and wireless; it's about getting tablets and laptops into students' hands, loading them with high-quality educational software and content, training educators on how to use technology to enrich the classroom experience, and ensuring students can continue this learning at home through wireless connectivity.

These commitments will help deliver the ConnectED vision more quickly to more classrooms around the country — particularly those serving low-income students. They will also help make the most of the government and investment in broadband infrastructure by ensuring it is put to the best educational use.

\$750 Million in New Private-Sector Commitments: Today, the President highlighted some of the most impressive examples of companies rising to meet this challenge, including:

- **Apple** – In an unprecedented commitment for the company, Apple has pledged \$100 million in iPads, MacBooks, and other products along with content and professional development to enrich learning in disadvantaged schools, including interactive learning tools and ongoing support that can have a profound impact for students and teachers in the communities that need it most.
- **AT&T** – To ensure that when schools embrace the ConnectED vision, the learning does not stop at the school walls, AT&T is committing to provide \$100 million in mobile broadband services

over three years to enable educational access for middle school students and related teacher professional development to help them implement technology into the classroom.

- **Autodesk** – Autodesk, a designer of leading advanced software products in design, drafting, and engineering, has committed to expand the company’s “Design the Future” program to be available to every secondary school in the country in 2014. The program, which offers free 3D design software, project-based curricula, training, and certification, will help secondary school teachers teach critical problem-solving and technical skills in demand, in high-paying STEM fields like engineering and architecture – offering for free over \$250 million in value to American schools.
- **Microsoft** – Microsoft Corp. is committing to a substantial affordability program open to all U.S. public schools by deeply discounting the price of its signature Windows operating system, which will substantially bring down the cost of Windows-based devices, and by increasing access to a range of software and services tailored for education, including Bing for Schools, Office 365 Education (making more than 12 million copies of Office available to students for free at qualifying institutions), and Microsoft’s Partners in Learning teacher training resources. For the roughly 2000 at-risk designated schools in the U.S., Microsoft will give away Microsoft’s IT Academy program and training – and will donate over \$1 million to cover certification exams for students from these schools.
- **O’Reilly Media** – Through a partnership with Safari Books Online, O’Reilly Media will commit to making over \$100 million in educational content and tools such as technology books and publications available, for free, to every school in America. This commitment can provide students at a range of grade levels with the technological skills they need to be prepared in a globalized, digital economy.
- **Sprint** – Sprint is committing to offer free wireless service for up to 50,000 low-income high school students over the next four years using schools’ existing or new educational devices provided by other partners. Sprint will begin providing these services beginning with the 2014-2015 school year and provide up to 3 GB per month on the Sprint network per student on its most advanced network platforms.
- **Verizon** – The Verizon Foundation announced a multi-year program to support the ConnectED vision through up to \$100 million in cash and in-kind commitments, significantly expanding existing and launching new digital learning initiatives. These include expanding the Innovative Learning Schools program to all fifty states, the creation of an Innovative App Challenge to drive more development in underserved curricular areas, and new professional development opportunities for teachers.

Connecting Over 20 Million Students with a Major Down-payment by the FCC: The Federal Communications Commission is announcing a new plan to direct \$2 billion over the next two years to dramatically expand its investment in high-speed connectivity for America’s school and libraries. That investment will begin flowing to schools in 2014, and will focus specifically on the broadband connection and Wi-Fi that too many schools lack, and will be the foundation of the ConnectED transformation of schools. This is an essential down-payment on reaching the President’s goal of connecting 99% of students to high-speed broadband and wireless over the next five years.

Investing in Next-Generation Professional Development: To support teachers as they use new technology to improve learning enabled by ConnectED, the President will request new funding in his

FY2015 Budget for school districts and schools to provide high-quality professional development as they transition to digital learning and high-speed connectivity. This funding will enable more school districts to support teachers with tools including instructional coaches, high-quality digital content, blended learning models, and online communication and collaboration. In addition, today the Department of Education is releasing guidance to states, school districts, and schools on ways that existing federal funds can be best leveraged immediately to support schools and educators in the transition to digital learning in support of the President's ConnectED Initiative. Specifically, the guidance letter outlines ways in which current federal education funding available to states and school districts can be used to provide professional development, access to high-quality digital content, and devices for learning.

About Buck Lodge Middle School

The President made these announcements at Buck Lodge Middle School, a diverse school “on the move” that is on the path to realize the President’s ConnectED vision.

In 2011, Buck Lodge Middle School was selected as one of four Prince Georges County Public Schools to integrate tablets into the classroom through a program called the Transforming Education through Digital Learning project. Each student receives a tablet as a learning tool to allow access to digital instructional content. The school also leverages two computer labs to round out its technology education.

Every class uses technology every day and lessons are designed around integration of technology to help students create and collaborate using the highest level of technology. Teachers receive training on how to integrate the technology into their classroom instruction, including through a summer academy workshop. Principal James Richardson was named an Apple Distinguished Educator for his work integrating technology at Buck Lodge.