HIGH-SPEED INTERNET FOR TRIBAL SCHOOLS & LIBRARIES

AGENDA

• Connectivity
  – Tribal communities
  – Schools
  – Libraries

• Affordability
• Stories
• Getting Started
HIGH SPEED INTERNET FOR TRIBAL SCHOOLS & LIBRARIES

WHY IS BROADBAND IMPORTANT?

• Prepares students with the skills they need for a 21st century economy
  – Improves educational outcomes
  – Broadband skills are essential to succeed in college and careers
• Connects your community to the rest of the country, and the world
  – High-speed connections at schools can support broader plans to increase broadband access in Tribal Lands
• Make sure your school or library is future ready
CONNECTIVITY IN TRIBAL COMMUNITIES
THE IMPORTANCE OF BROADBAND
Historically, Tribal communities have lacked meaningful access to communications services.

“It is critical that Native American students have the same opportunity as their non-Native counterparts to access high capacity broadband Internet technologies.

Otherwise, Native children will be left behind as education tools increasingly become digital.”

- The Benton Foundation
TRIBAL CONNECTIVITY

TRIBAL CONNECTIVITY VS. NATIONWIDE

- 60% of Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) schools don’t have adequate digital broadband access to be aligned with college-and-career-readiness standards

- 41% of Americans living on Tribal lands lack access to 25 Mbps / 3 Mbps broadband

- FCC short-term benchmark of 100 mbps per 1,000 students

- Compare to 10% of all Americans and 4% of urban Americans

- And 68% of Americans living in rural areas of tribal lands lack access
BROADBAND IN SCHOOLS & LIBRARIES

THE IMPORTANCE OF BROADBAND
BROADBAND

STUDENTS NEED FAST INTERNET!

• Prepares students with the skills they need for a 21st century economy
  – Improves educational outcomes
  – Broadband skills are essential to succeed in college and careers
  – Filling the homework gap
• Upgraded college/career-ready standards for grades 3-12
  – Engage in learning beyond textbooks
  – Greater use of technology for research and homework
  – Standards for technology research and media skills

From the NIEA one-pager: State Standards and E-rate in Tribal Communities
WITH BROADBAND, YOU CAN…

• Have an interactive, personalized learning experience
• Use blended learning
  – Digital and face-to-face activities
• Have better access to Native language-learning resources
• Take advanced placement (AP) classes remotely
• Practice and take online testing and lectures
• Connect teachers, students, and parents
• Assess students, do lesson planning, and complete administrative tasks
• Connects your community to the rest of the country, and the world
  – High-speed connections at schools can support broader plans to increase broadband access in Tribal Lands
THE IMPORTANCE OF TRIBAL LIBRARIES

- 38% of Tribal libraries are the only source of free public Internet access in their communities*
- Tribal libraries serve as a communication lifeline
  - Preserve language, sacred materials, acting as cultural guardians
  - Serve large and geographically diverse areas
  - Offer a connection to higher education
  - Provide Digitized content, eBooks, online catalogs, the opportunity for research, job applications, homework space, and more
61 percent of the nation’s public libraries receive E-Rate discounts

15 percent of reporting Tribal libraries receive E-Rate discounts

Over 95% offer free public Internet access

90% offer free public Internet access
CHALLENGES

THE IMPORTANCE OF BROADBAND
BROADBAND

CHALLENGES FOR TRIBAL LIBRARIES

• Tribal libraries do not have the same funding sources as public libraries
  – **Solution**: E-rate funds can help

• On average, 50% of Tribal Libraries are unaware of the E-rate Program
  – **Solution**: Attendance at conferences such as ATALM
  – **Solution**: Help us spread the word!

• Of the libraries that are aware, almost 30% find it too complicated or don’t have the time to apply
  – **Solution**: Having access to the Tribal Liaison and our resources can help
AFFORDABILITY

BROADBAND EXPENSES

• FCC goal of **100 Mbps per 1,000 students** (short-term)
  – Average $5.07/Mbps for districts meeting the FCC’s goals
  – Average $12.33/Mbps for districts not meeting the goals
  – Long-term goal of 1 Gbps per 1,000 students

• **Affordability remains a primary roadblock** to high-speed connections for schools
  – Tribal schools and libraries do not have the same funding sources as public entities
E-rate funds can help. The FCC’s Schools and Libraries (E-rate) Program provides discounts on broadband to schools and libraries. The program is designed to connect our nation’s schools and libraries.

Discounts range from 20% to 90%.

Tribal schools and libraries typically receive a 80 to 90% discount.
DISCOUNTS ON HIGH-SPEED INTERNET

Discounts for **schools and libraries**

Broadband service for elementary schools, secondary schools, and libraries

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$3.9B in funding is available per year through the FCC’s Schools and Libraries (E-rate) Program
Letcher County is very rural, with 3,100 students and an 85% E-rate discount.

They used a $409,010 funding commitment for a complete refresh of internal building wiring, wireless access Points and switches.

The district can now implement BYOD for the first time.

These upgrades will give us the capacity to allow students to use the devices they already own in the BYOD environment. The upgrades also give us the capacity to consider one-to-one solutions in the future. The benefits are endless. I honestly cannot imagine where we would be without the E-rate program.”

– Randy Bailey, Director of Tech
The Quapaw Tribe is located on the northeast tip of Oklahoma.

They have been committed $44,000 since 2012 to increase their library’s bandwidth and upgrade from DSL to T-1 lines.

“Because of the E-Rate funding we are able to offer a faster Internet connection to our patrons (T-1 line). Before we started receiving E-Rate funding, our Internet connection was DSL, which is much slower. Not having to pay for internet service means we are able to spend more on library materials.”

Patty Billings, Librarian, Quapaw Tribe of OK
QUESTIONS?
THE IMPORTANCE OF BROADBAND
GETTING STARTED
THE IMPORTANCE OF BROADBAND
TRIBAL TRAINING

- Tribal Training is designed to promote awareness and successful participation in the E-rate Program
  - Goal: reduce the digital divide and promote high-speed broadband connectivity to Tribal schools and libraries

- The E-rate Tribal Liaison is dedicated to helping applicants from schools and libraries on Tribal lands
  - Contact me for assistance: mhoward@usac.org • (202) 772-4535
The Tribal Training Page (above) contains information on resources:

1) Monthly conference call (hosted by E-rate Tribal Liaison)
   - Guidance, tips, reminders and Q&A

2) Live training events:
   - In-depth training for Tribes on how to apply for E-rate Program funds

3) One on one training:
   - Contact me directly with your program questions or issues
OTHER RESOURCES

usac.org/sl
THANK YOU!

NEXT PRESENTATION: E-RATE 101

usac.org/sl • TribalTraining@usac.org • (888) 203-8100